

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

I am writing to express my support of HB 2979, which provides funding for Oregon's Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants as well as similar funding for Food Hubs and Farmers Markets.

The Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants are supporting Oregon's small and underserved producers to be more resilient to fire and extreme weather events. This is a great alternative to traditional disaster relief funding, as it has given farmers the resources to maintain their crops and livestock through disasters, rather than being compensated by the State after they lose them. This is a strategic and responsible use of state funding.

I am a recipient of the Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants, which is providing critical funding for our microdairy business, animals and resources to be resilient during the most stressful times of year, heat waves and droughts, which are becoming more common and longer-lasting. Providing secure areas in shade for our cows, as well as increasing our water-holding and distributing capacity, and more abundant on-farm feed will make us more secure and self-sufficient during challenging times.

HB 2979 passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Ag, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water with over 200 submissions of written testimony in support, including a letter signed by 248 farms, food hubs, farmers markets, community organizations and others.

*Continuity of this funding is critical!* This biennium, \$7 million dollars were requested for the Disaster Resilience grants with only \$2.5 million available. As you can see, the need far exceeds available funding.

I urge you to fund HB 2979. Thank you.

Aimee Marciniak  
Grassward Dairy  
Lebanon