



Education Subcommittee of Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

June 20, 2017

Dear Co-chairs Monroe and Smith Warner and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network, a state-wide organization with over 900 stakeholders, we are writing to express *our strong support for HB 2038*, the Farm to School Bill, and to request that you do all you can to maintain funding for the Program.

HB 2038 maintains funding, in the form of grants administered by Oregon Department of Education, to reimburse school districts for their purchases of Oregon grown and processed foods and for food-based, agriculture-based or garden-based educational activities.

The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network supports the -11 amendments and requests that they be adopted.

Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools. Students gain access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips. Farm to school empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy.

Farmers win: Farm to school can serve as a significant financial opportunity for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors and food manufacturers by opening the doors to an institutional market worth millions of dollars in Oregon.

Kids win: Farm to school provides all kids access to nutritious, high quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow. Farm to school activities enhance classroom education through hands-on learning related to food, health, agriculture and nutrition.

Communities win: Farm to school benefits everyone from students, teachers and administrators to parents and farmers, providing opportunities to build family and community engagement. Buying from local producers and processors creates new jobs and strengthens the local economy.

Please do all you can to secure funding for this important program!

Thank you for your consideration and your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Kemple". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Megan Kemple
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