



Foods That Make A Difference®

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Education

FROM: Michelle Markesteyn Ratcliffe, PhD
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RE: Written testimony in support of **HB 2038-A**

Dear Co-Chairs Monroe and Warner, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Sub-Committee on Education.

My name is Michelle M. Ratcliffe, PhD, Farm to School Specialist at Truitt Family Foods. We strongly support full funding of HB 2038-A.

The work of the Oregon Departments of Agriculture and Education, the Legislature and community partners have done in developing the K-12 markets through the farm to school programs has transformed school lunch in Oregon, and as a result nationally.

In fact the strides in the K-12 farm to school market and simultaneous changes in the distribution system have fueled the way we think about all of our markets, and how we position ourselves within them. At Truitt Family Foods we have developed an innovative line of all natural, shelf-stable hummus and white bean puree dippers that are ideal for the retail and airline market, and most significantly for the K-12 school food market.

The strength of the K-12 market at home and across the country has given us the signal we needed to create the new line of healthy K-12 market ready hummus and bean dips which are motivated by the imperative to increase consumption of vegetables. This is a testament to the significance of a state legislative body that is supportive of farm to school, alongside the local market development activities of the state agency and partners in the public and private sectors.

For the foreseeable future, our new line of products will be a very important part of our business, and is made tenuous by episodic grant dollars flowing in and out of school districts. Our situation is not unique. Ingredient supply chains, production practices, and distribution networks require a reliable and on-going quantity of sales. HB 2038-A is a meaningful step in the right direction.

We strongly urge you to fully fund HB 2038 and ensure farm to school and school gardens in Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

TRUITT FAMILY FOODS

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