

From: [Bill Lakey](#)
To: [Exhibits HAGLU](#)
Subject: Written testimony for Farm to School Bill, HB 2579
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2019 6:36:37 AM

Chair Clem and Members of the Committee,

I am a parent of children in the Corbett Oregon schools, and employed by an Oregon family farm currently. Previous to working for this local farm I was employed with a farmer owned distributor in Oregon, Organically Grown, for 19 years. I am writing on behalf of TopHat Mushrooms and my children.

I'm writing to ask you to support HB 2579, to expand funding for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs. Farm to School Programs support students, farmers and communities. Specifically, I have seen it make a difference for my kids and both employers. Without these funds our schools would not receive the nutritious bounty of locally grown organic fresh produce. The premium that local, and organic, fresh produce receives generally puts this out of reach for our schools.

These funds have had a tremendously positive impact on both the farms and the students served by our school kitchens. Our farmers are able to market product that may be slightly imperfect and not appropriate for their retail sales, making an important and crucial impact on their ability to stay farming. These funds provide a needed connection to our farms, and to the Earth. The gardens our kids get to explore and learn from have a lasting and deep impact on our children. I could not get my own child out into our garden until she got excited from her lessons in the school garden project at the Springdale CHAMPS program in the Corbett School District.

As well the health benefits of increased access to fresh and local fruits and vegetables should be self-evident by this time. With these funds schools can bring in more local, and organic, fresh foods that expand our kids awareness of what Oregon has to offer them. As well, by funding farm fresh produce we are improving the health of our students.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

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