

Attention: Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

RE: Support HB 2579

I am a volunteer (approximately 10 years) primarily at Memorial Middle School, (MMS) Albany, supporting staff in their garden programs. Additionally, MMS was a recipient of the F2S Initiative this past year & with that funding, I became the Garden Coordinator at MMS.

I encourage you to support HB 2579, to expand funding for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden(F2S) programs. As you know, F2S Programs support students, farmers and communities. My experiences in Albany schools demonstrates that F2S has provides a wealth of experiences (learning, tastings, hands on activities, field trips) that benefits the school & the community at large.

Students learn about the importance of ag in their lives, meet farmers on field trips, pick apples and learn about the long-term health benefits of fresh vegetable & fruits in their diets. Thanks to the F2S program!

Young people are more likely to eat fresh fruit and vegetables if they have been involved in their production. Thank you F2S for your enhancing this opportunity!

I have thought that Albany is a rather rural community- surrounded by farms. I have been amazed at how many children from the area have little to no knowledge/contact with farms and the importance of supporting our agricultural connections. Thanks to F2S funding our children are learning about those connections!

Thank you for your service to our state and the people of Oregon is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

William Drabkin
Corvallis, OR