

The Senate Committee on Education, attn: Chair Senator Michael Dembrow, Vice-Chair Senator Chuck Thomsen and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill HB404-2, Advancing the Development and Growth of the Organic Industry and Community in OR.

My name is Emily Stebbins, and I live in Portland. I am a Montessori elementary teacher, but I spend most of these pandemic days on video calls with my students. In between teaching and supporting their work, I find things to do to stop climate change.

Maria Montessori said, "The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind." But young people can only fulfill that hope and promise if we can give them a world with air they can breathe, water they can drink, and food that nourishes them.

Organic agriculture promises to help deliver all of those things. Growing a diverse agricultural ecosystem is a way to build carbon-sequestering healthy soils, while putting an end to the use of petrochemicals.

Meanwhile, we can increase local food security and resilience by reinvesting in rural farming communities, and by sharing that wealth across the state. Food grown in healthy soils is (of course!) more nutritious than those grown in poor soils, and making organic foods available through WIC is a simple way to increase equity in Oregon communities.

Please support House Bill 404-2, and help grow healthy food in healthy soil for all Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Emily Stebbins  
Portland, Oregon