

Submitter: CHARLENE ROLLINS

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5014

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 18, 2023

Co-Chairs Senator Frederick and Representative McLain and members of the Committee

I am writing in support of the Farm to School Grant Program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget. This Grant program provides critical funding for schools and early childhood education programs to purchase Oregon foods, hands-on farm and garden education programs, equipment and infrastructure for food producers and technical assistance for the farm to school community. My husband and I produced annual dinners at our restaurant for 7 years, the early years of the Farm to School program in Jackson County. We donated 100% of the proceeds from a tiny family-operated restaurant with its own organic garden to the program because we believed in the importance of all children's exposure to "real" food: its provenance, its preparations, and its great pleasures. Sustaining the current level of \$10.2 million dollars will support dependable business relationships between schools and food producers and maintain consistent educational programs that connect students to agriculture and nutrition. The project is now widely, though not widely or deeply enough, rooted in the community, which is both a sign of its worth, successes, and importance, and also of the need for its continued growth in reach and depth in knitting community resources and their beneficiaries.

It teaches the meaning and implicit value of growing food.

It builds skills for wellness and health in kids and communities

- It builds a strong local food system and supports our local economy

Supports schools as hubs for communities especially during times of crisis such as wildfires and pandemic

I ask that you support including this grant program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at the current level of \$10.2 million so this program can continue to support healthy kids, schools and small farmers.

Thank you for your time.

Charlene Rollins  
New Sammy's Cowboy Bistro  
Talent, Oregon