

Submitter: Madeline Brasunas

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

3/22/23

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. 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.

I live in northeast Portland, and I worked for FoodCorps for eight years, a national nonprofit that connects kids to food in schools. I was a teacher for two years with FoodCorps, teaching nutrition and garden education, and I have seen first-hand how important hands-on farm and garden education programs is for kids. It impacts their health, ability to pay attention in class, and food security. It also connects kids to farms and the people who grow their food. I am also on the board of Growing Gardens, a Portland nonprofit that supports gardens in schools, prisons and backyards.

I support this grant program because it builds skills for health and wellness in kids and communities, and builds strong local food systems in supports our local economy.

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 communities. Thank you for your time.

Madeline Brasunas

Portland, OR