

Submitter: Kevin House

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5515

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

March 13, 2025

Co-Chairs Senator Sollman and Representative Ruiz and members of the Committee

I am testifying today in support of funding for the Farm to School Grant Program included in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at \$12 million dollars. This represents a 9% increase from the current service level. This Grant program provides funding for schools and early childhood education programs to purchase Oregon foods, hands-on farm and garden education programs and technical assistance for the farm to school community. This past biennium, there were over \$15 million dollars of requests for this funding. With increases in costs of food, supplies and staffing over the past few years, this modest increase is needed simply to maintain the current level of programming.

I support farm to school because food is a necessity and not everyone has access to healthy, local food. As control of food production has shifted into the hands of fewer and fewer entities, it is also more crucial now than ever that we educate young people about how to grow food. Investing in local agriculture also benefits the local economy and Oregonians in general.

I ask that you support including this grant program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at \$12 million. Thank you for your time.

Kevin House
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