

**Dear Ways and Means Joint Subcommittee on Education,**

I am in support of the investment the state of Oregon makes in FFA and Career & Technical Education. I would like to see full funding for the following Grants-In-Aid at their current service level, instead of the 11% reduction they are slated for:

- Oregon FFA Support
- Summer Ag Ed Days Grant Support
- Secondary CTE Career Pathways Grants
- CTE Revitalization Grants
- CTSO Student Leadership Center Grant

As a student who served as an Oregon FFA State Officer from 2023–2024, I saw the impact that FFA and CTE had on both me and members across the state. I heard stories about members who only joined FFA because of the resources and support it provides, increased chapter involvement because of the funding and grants available, and the growth and experience FFA provides for all students.

I had a conversation with a student who did not feel worthy of living because of her experiences and home life, but after she joined FFA, she found a new passion for agriculture and a community that supports one another. She became an active, contributing member of her chapter and even placed first in a State Leadership Development Event. As she was building the courage to tell me that, if it weren't for FFA, she wouldn't be here today, I couldn't help but think about the several other similar conversations I have had where FFA made students feel like they have a home.

FFA is not just another club that meets every once in a while; it is an organization that genuinely cares for all students, no matter their background. FFA provides students with premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education. There is not an advisor, state staff member, or officer who would not be willing to help a member find their place in this incredible organization and discover all it has to offer. This organization is the future of agriculture, and we need to be investing in it today for the future of this country.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jael Cruikshank  
Bend, Oregon  
jaelcruik@gmail.com