

Submitter: Carla Manuel
On Behalf Of: SB 5502 Farm to School Equipment Infrastructure
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5502

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

3.28.2025

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

I am writing on behalf of FoodCorps and Growing Gardens PDX in support of the Farm to School Equipment and Infrastructure Grant Program in the Oregon Department of Agriculture's budget. This Grant program provides funding for food producers to access necessary equipment to meet the demands of the school marketplace.

As a Farm-to-School Educator and former Chef, I have seen firsthand the improved student performance and behavior that is a direct impact to access and exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables. This funding will assist in improving infrastructure needed to continue keeping the connection between farm producers and local schools as a conservation effort for children's health and development.

We support this grant program because:

It addresses a significant barrier for small and mid-sized producers selling to schools. This program is unique and valuable to food producers who aspire to enter the school food market.

In Oregon, there is a significant need for food producers to be equipped to meet the growing demand from schools for local products.

Schools and child care centers have specific requirements for products in regards to quantities, delivery, storage and food safety.

I ask that you support this grant program in the Oregon Department of Agriculture's budget at \$1 million. Thank you for your time.

Carla Manuel

FoodCorps and Growing Gardens
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