



290 First Street  
P.O. Box 100  
Gervais, Oregon 97026-0100  
Phone: (503) 792-3803  
FAX: (503) 792-3809  
[www.gervais.k12.or.us](http://www.gervais.k12.or.us)

*We, with the involvement of our culturally rich community, will provide a creative, enriching and safe environment,  
Which instills a desire to become a life-long learner and a responsible citizen.*

March 10, 2015

To: Members of the Oregon House Committee on Energy and Environment

From: Clare Columbus, Nutrition Services Director Gervais School District

I would like to voice my concerns about HB 2762 regarding the elimination of polystyrene in school meal service.

Gervais School District is a small, rural school district with an enrollment of 1035 students in K-12. We have a high rate of poverty which allows us to benefit from multiple federal programs to feed students during the school day. We do rely on products made with polystyrene to serve those meals and to minimize costs. In the past we made a conscious effort to purchase and wash all trays and utensils. We had to add 1.5 hours per day per school just for tray washing. There was also the additional cost of chemical purchases and storage. Another cost was that of upgrading outdated dishwashers. One machine alone can cost \$10,000, money that most programs don't readily have access to. Most would have to plan and budget ahead for such expenditure.

One cost that we didn't realize was in a poorly designed kitchen where the employees had potential Worker's Comp issues from operating a dish washer. Rather than redesign the kitchen which was out of our budget, we returned to using the foam trays.

Please consider my comments as you make this decision. School Food Service programs operate on very lean budget and would find it difficult to operate within these new constraints.

Thank you,

Clare Columbus, SNS

*Gervais School District is an equal opportunity educator and employer. El Distrito Escolar de Gervais es una empresa educadora de oportunidad igual.*