



February 10, 2017

Dear Representative Clem and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mardi Solomon and I am a Farm-to-School Program Coordinator in Whatcom County, Washington. I am writing to ask you to support HB 2038, to preserve or expand funding for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs. Although I do not live or work in Oregon, I am very familiar with Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden Network (OFSSGN) and the wonderful work that Oregon's food access and education programs do on behalf of children, families, schools, farms, and food producers.

As you probably know, Oregon is a leader in the nationwide farm to school movement, paving the way for programs throughout the country, including Washington, to follow. In fact, leaders from Oregon have been singled out for their outstanding creative and ground-breaking work, and recruited to run farm to school programs at the federal level. Washington's farm to school programs at the state and local levels have received extremely valuable technical assistance from many members of the OFSSGN over the years and we have modeled our work on what has been done in Oregon.

We know that farm to school programs benefit kids, who require healthy food to learn and thrive, and local economies. We also know that farm to school programs function best with well-coordinated leadership and funding at the state level. Oregon has succeeded in building an exemplary, cutting edge, statewide farm to school movement and it would be a real mistake and a loss to reduce support for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs. Please support HB 2038 and expansion of Oregon's farm to school work.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mardi L. Solomon".

Mardi L. Solomon, Coordinator
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