



8129 Clear Creek Road • Parkdale, OR 97041 • (541) 352-7115 • www.mthoodfruit.com

February 13, 2017

Dear Chair Clem and Esteemed Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

RE: HB 2038 Relating to School Food Programs

My name is Randy Kiyokawa, a third generation farmer from Parkdale, Oregon located in the beautiful Hood River Valley.

I respectfully ask you to support HB 2038 by preserving or expanding funding for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs.

Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs help kids, families, farmers, ranchers, orchardists, and Oregon's economy – simultaneously, all with the same dollar allocated by you.

The Farm to School program has directly affected our farm by allowing me to move smaller sized apples and pears that are discounted or discarded in the normal distribution channels. Currently we have provided apples and pears to Portland, David Douglas, and Hood River School districts. In 2016, students from these schools received 81,600 pounds (over 20 tons) from our farm. Extrapolated over producers throughout Oregon, your investment is significant.

I have positioned my family's farm to supply schools in the future by building a fruit-processing warehouse that will pass a third-party food safety audit. The increased revenue from the Farm to School program and other direct marketing aspects of our operation have allowed my employees to earn a higher-than-average wage and to work during periods when they would otherwise be idle. This business plan creates jobs, adds revenues to the state coffers through payroll taxes, and increases the purchasing power of our employees.

These are just a few real benefits I have experienced, but please let me tell you about how I've seen the program affect the kids of those schools receiving the fruit.

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The flavor of our tree-ripened apples is second to none. And, instead of the fruit distributed through normal channels going into the garbage can, our apples and pears are actually eaten! Let me share one of many examples. One day at our farm fruit stand, a lady approached me with her kids tailing behind. Gleaming, her first words were, "Thank you!" I asked her, "For what?!" She then explained how she had a hard time getting her son to eat fruit, until one day at school he ate one of our apples that was so delicious he came home and wanted more! More fruit! This mother came all the way to our farm to fill a box so that her children would have the same fresh fruit whenever they wanted.

Not only does the program work for local and sustainable reasons, it works for the kids.

Thank you for the consideration of continued funding of this valuable program, and for appreciating its positive, healthy lifestyle impacts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Randy Kiyokawa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Randy Kiyokawa, President
541-806-7115