



*Painted Hills Natural Beef, Inc.*

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February 13, 2017

Dear Chair Clem, Co-Chairs Sprenger and McLain, and Representatives Barreto, McKeown, Esquivel, Power, Smith, and Witt,

My Name is Will Homer, I am a partner owner and current Chief Operating Officer at Painted Hills Natural Beef in Fossil, Oregon.

I am writing to ask for your full support of House Bill 2038, which would maintain or expand funding for Oregon's Farm to School and School Garden programs. I apologize for not making the hearing in person, but time and distance is simply too limiting to make the trip.

This program is specifically important to me from several differing reasons. I have two young men in the public-school system. First in the Fossil School system, and now in the Condon School District. When my boys first started in school, and we started to experience school lunches. Very quickly, as an owner in Painted Hills Natural Beef, I felt we needed to provide a clean quality beef that kids might like to eat. We had to subsidize the program, but we slept well at night knowing what the kids are eating. Our mini school program has grown to provide beef to all three schools in Wheeler County along with the three dormitories associated with the schools.

With the help of the Oregon Farm to School Program we have expanded our reach to provide beef to several school lunch programs in Oregon outside of Wheeler County. The user of our beef is the Bend-La Pine School District. They have been a great ally in the development of the Painted Hills Grass-Fed program. From this relationship, we have also built relationships with the Redmond, Bethel, and Hood River School Districts.

I am going to leave you with this. I am not a nutritional expert; however, I am a typical dad/coach. On one of our many road trips I gave the kids a small, one once, package of jerky. With that protein in their bellies, those kids were the most focused and coachable I had seen the entire year. The jerky was a hit too. The kids were looking forward every trip after.

Thank you for your time and for your service. My hope is that this program can continue for the benefit of the kids.

Respectfully

|

Will Homer  
Chief Operating Officer  
Painted Hills Natural Beef, Inc.  
Fossil, Oregon