

Oregon FFA and Agricultural Education HB 2444 - Summary

Background

The Oregon FFA Association was established in 1929 as an integral part of agricultural education. FFA is one part of a total agriculture program – the classroom instruction, FFA, and Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE).

Until 2011, the Oregon FFA Association was supported through the state of Oregon. However, beginning in the 1990's funding continued to decrease until – after becoming almost nonexistent – Oregon FFA Association worked with the Department of Education to step away and rely on private funding sources to continue.

Goals

Since that time, the state of Oregon has greatly increased spending in numerous areas, but does not invest in the Oregon FFA Association and the impact it has on student success. This bill seeks to reestablish that support in ways that increase student participation and access to leadership development and career preparation.

This legislation will provide funding for Oregon FFA to:

- Enroll each student registered in a grade 9 through 12 school-approved AST program of study for a minimum of one course per school year as a member of the National FFA Organization, removing financial barriers to entry and participation
 - o *This will almost double the number of students in Oregon who have access to FFA activities and opportunities*
- *Provide student learning supports* through the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET) for experiential learning and career related learning
- *Provide support leadership development and training* through multiple programs that will reach all students, including at the local, regional and state level
 - o Local chapter officer leadership training
 - o Leadership conferences for first year members on career and college readiness pathways
 - o Statewide training for Oregon FFA Association officers, including coaching and industry partnership development
- *Coordinate industry-verified and guided Career Development Events (competitive)* across local, regional, and state levels in career exploration and preparation
 - o This will include curriculum development aligned with industry, student engagement activities, and teacher support and development

In addition, this legislation will create a grant program for supporting summer extended contracts for AST teachers to support summer programming and supervision of student Supervised Agricultural Experience projects. These are experiential learning activities that are valuable ways students prepare and explore careers. Student SAEs also have a documented statewide economic impact of \$13.8 million/year.

In total, this comes to an estimated investment of \$83.33 per student per year. This will leverage and complement the statewide private funding support as well as local investment. For such a small number, a huge amount of impact is possible – especially for those students who are currently financially denied opportunities to be part and engage.

Oregon Agriculture Teacher's Association
Roger Beyer, Lobbyist