



Joint Ways & Means Human Services Subcommittee

March 25, 2019

I am writing on behalf of the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network to request that you maintain funding for the WIC and Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Programs (FDNP), through SB 5526. The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network supports efforts to incorporate healthy, local food into school meals. We recognize the value of supporting Oregon's farmers and food producers and providing access to healthy local food to all Oregonians.

Discontinuing \$1.2 million in one-time funds for the WIC and Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Programs (FDNP) would dramatically reduce the number of families able to purchase healthy, locally grown produce.

In 2018 the Oregon Health Authority issued program vouchers to 54,000 WIC mothers and children, and 47,800 low-income seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables direct from Oregon farmers. Without additional state funding, 20,000 fewer nutritionally at-risk mothers and their children would be able to access fresh produce in 2020. The Senior FDNP would be effectively eliminated due to spending limitations of the matching federal grant which make state funding essential to defray the costs of certification and benefit distribution. Adverse effects also include reduced income to 600+ Oregon farmers who earned nearly \$3.2 million from the programs in 2017-2018.

Please maintain funding for the WIC and Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Programs (FDNP) through SB 5526.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan Kemple". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Megan Kemple, Director