



05/31/2019

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of Committee:

I am the owner with Fresh Elements Farms LLC. I am writing on behalf of myself and Fresh Elements Farms LLC.

I'm writing to ask you to support HB 2579 and the most recent Amendments, to expand funding for Oregon's farm to school and school garden programs. HB 2579 expands funding for schools to buy Oregon foods and for farm- and garden-based education.

Farm to school programs supports students, farmers and communities. I have seen these programs make a difference.

We have sold to Beaverton School District, Portland School District, Parkrose School District, and Stayton School District. Since 2018, they've purchased Dried Blueberries, Dried Cherries, Dried Cranberries, and Hazelnuts from us, total worth about \$32,000.

Some school purchasing specialist told us without the Farm 2 School grant; their kids won't have the opportunity to try Oregon Dried Blueberries, Dried Cherries. They know the nutrition of dried blueberries and cherries rich and better for kids don't like to eat fresh fruit, but the pricing is too high. Now even small schools can purchase small quantities and derived by us.

The farm to school connection has benefited our local Oregon farms by increasing the opportunity to compete with the large national brand like Ocean Spray.

Please do all you can to advance and fully fund HB 2579.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. McLain", written in a cursive style.

Fresh Elements Farms LLC

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