



Education Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means

6/4/19

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of Committee:

I am a parent and teacher and environmental educator at a local Waldorf school and the Institute of Permaculture Education for Children. I'm writing to ask you to support HB 2579, 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 support students, farmers and communities. I have seen these programs make a difference as they are a win-win-win scenario in which students have access to healthier foods, boosting their nutrition and in turn increasing productivity and performance in school. Additionally, we are supporting local farmers with this bill. This gesture strengthens local communities and supports local food systems, a necessary step in the direction of sustainability. Understanding systems and applying systems thinking in order to generate solutions to our large environmental and social issues is at the heart of the curriculum that I teach, both to children as well as to educators in the form of professional development. There is a growing movement of committed adults in the realm of education who realize that the changes we want to see need to happen immediately, for the health and wellbeing of our future. To me, there is no more pressing issue than this. A large-scale shift in this direction will have ripple effects that will benefit communities in so many other ways. Student success leads to lower crime rates and greater access to higher education. We need to educate change-makers, and empower them to seek leadership roles. For this reason, we are imploring our current political leaders to heed this call and rise to action.

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

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Kelly Hogan
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