

HB 2579

Relating to Farm-to-School Grant Program

HB 2579 expands the types of entities that may receive grants from the Farm-to-School Grant Program; the purposes for which the grant may be used; and the types of entities that may receive grants for food-based, agriculture-based, or garden-based educational activities. New potential recipients include Oregon food producers such as farmers, ranchers, and seafood harvesters. In addition, the bill expands eligibility to centers-based programs for children in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and entities that provide Summer Food Service. The bill also directs the Oregon Department of Education to evaluate the effectiveness of the programs and to ensure that technical assistance and resources are provided to certain entities. The measure directs the Department of Agriculture to enter into an agreement with the Department of Education to distribute funding for infrastructure and equipment.

The bill appropriates a total of \$10.35 million General Fund to ODE for the purposes of the Farm-to-School program. \$7.4 million General Fund will go for agricultural purchases. Included is \$500,000 General Fund for ODA to provide infrastructure and equipment grants for Oregon Producers. The balance of the appropriation will be used to pay for education, training, technical assistance, and program administration.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends HB 2579 be amended by the -A7 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended.