

Submitter: Kristy Athens

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5014

Co-Chairs Senator Frederick and Representative McLain and members of the Committee

I am writing on behalf of Genuine Wallowa County LLC dba GWC Provisions in support of the Farm to School Grant Program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget. This Grant program provides critical funding for schools and early childhood education programs to purchase Oregon foods, hands-on farm and garden education programs, equipment and infrastructure for food producers and technical assistance for the farm to school community. Sustaining the current level of \$10.2 million dollars will support dependable business relationships between schools and food producers and maintain consistent educational programs that connect students to agriculture and nutrition

In addition to running a small food hub in NE Oregon that supports local farms and ranchers, I do a bit of contract work for Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network. I have visited a number of our schools and can assure you that the positive impact of this program is far-reaching. From our fields to our kids' bellies, Farm to School bring new opportunities for the local community.

Farm to School has many attributes but I support this grant program because it builds a strong local food system and supports our local economy. I ask that you support including this grant program in the Oregon Department of Education's budget at the current level of \$10.2 million so this program can continue to support healthy kids, schools and communities. Thank you.