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21 March 2023

Co-Chairs Senator Lew Frederick, Representative Susan McLain, and Members  
of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education  
State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 5014, Farm to School

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Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of sustaining the current funding level of \$10.2 million for Farm to School programs through HB 5014. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that has worked with Oregonians for more than 40 years to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choices.

We created our Food Systems Program in 2015 to expand our work with partner organizations throughout the state who are working together to build and strengthen robust and healthy food systems across Oregon. The Farm to School Program is strongly supported by many of those partners because it is one of those rare opportunities to get multiple wins with one move: it not only supports Oregon's children, but also our farmers and our communities.

The main thrust of this program is to provide healthy and nutritious food to Oregon's school children, including early childcare and education and summer lunch. The fact that this food will be purchased from Oregon-based farms, who will then recirculate those proceeds in their own communities, is a bonus in the form of a boost to our agricultural economy. The educational components, from teaching kids where their food comes from to how to prepare fresh healthy foods, will create healthier future citizens and will perhaps inspire some to become farmers.

We urge you to sustain current funding of \$10.2 million for Farm to School programs in your consideration of HB 5014. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Holmes".

Greg Holmes  
Food Systems Program Director  
1000 Friends of Oregon