



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 22, 2011

Contact: Geoff Sugerman (503) 986-1907

Michael Cox (503) 986-1904

House Passes Farm to School Bill

House Bill 2800 connects Oregon farms with school cafeterias

SALEM – The House today unanimously passed the Oregon Farm to School Act. Chief sponsored by Representatives Brian Clem (D-Salem) and Tina Kotek (D-N/NE Portland) and co-sponsored by eleven other House Democrats, HB 2800 leverages state dollars to invest federal School Nutrition Program funds to buy local produce and food products.

“It’s a great day for Oregon. Farm to school is a triple-win. We get to feed our kids local and healthy food, we boost local businesses, and we reduce overall food miles,” said Rep. Clem.

House Bill 2800, a version of the policy sponsored by Representatives Clem and Kotek during the past two legislative sessions, would allow school districts to receive grants for reimbursement of up to 15 cents per meal for National School Lunch Program money spent to buy foods produced or processed in Oregon. The program requires that money received in reimbursement is also spent on Oregon food. The bill also supports food-based educational activities, including school garden programs.

“There’s nothing better than seeing a kid eating a pear as part of a healthy school lunch, until you see that kid eating an Oregon pear that created a job at the orchard in Medford,” said Rep. Kotek.

According to data from the 2007 pilot programs in Portland Public Schools and Gervais School District, every dollar spent in the Farm to School program has a 1.86 economic multiplier. In addition, there is an estimated 2.67 multiplier effect in employment. As a result, proponents argue that even a minimal investment of state dollars through House Bill 2800 would result in a significant impact to Oregon’s economy.

House Bill 2800 now moves to the Senate for consideration.

###