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Senator Kurt Schrader  
900 Court St. NE, S-209  
Salem, OR, 97301

May 30, 2007

Dear Senator Schrader:

Oregon Organic Coalition works to advance the development and growth of the organic industry and community in Oregon. We urge you to move HB 3476, HB 3185 and HB 3307 to the Joint Ways and Means Natural Resources Subcommittee, and pass the bills this session.

These three related bills will support Oregon farmers and the state's agriculture industry by increasing market opportunities for farmers, food processors and manufacturers, and by supporting agriculture-related economic development.

It is a well-known fact that fresh fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Oregon farmers and processors easily can supply the highest-quality products that meet federal school-meal program standards.

As repeated studies and farm-to-school and school garden programs have shown, when children learn about, grow and eat fresh and nutritious foods, they develop lifelong habits that improve their health and well-being, increase their awareness of agriculture's important role in their lives, and deepen their connections to and care for the environment. Healthy children are more likely to become healthy adults, thereby reducing long-term health-care costs. These bills will invest General Fund moneys to help Oregon children become healthy adults.

The bills' many other benefits include the positive environmental impacts of a diverse and vibrant local food supply, including the reduction of transportation-related emissions of greenhouse gases and reliance on imported oil.

We believe the bills are properly structured to cost-effectively deliver these benefits to Oregonians, and Oregon's vital agricultural community.

Thank you for your consideration.  
Sincerely,

Lynn Coody, OOC Chair  
Nick Andrews, OOC Secretary  
Susan Schechter, OOC Treasurer