

Four Corners Farmers and Ranchers Coalition
National Young Farmers Coalition

February 26th, 2018

House Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, & Natural Resources
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

Mike Nolan
President - Four Corners Farmers and Ranchers Collation
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Support for HB1236 – The Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC)

Dear Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Livestock, & Natural Resources,

Colorado's agricultural economy benefits from participation in federal food assistance programs, farm to school programs, and multi-sector research, analysis, and recommendations for improving our agricultural economy. The Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC) can help provide the infrastructure necessary to enhance our access to the latest research and provide easily accessible assistance in connecting to various programs and markets that will enhance our economic outcomes.

As a grower who both sells to school districts and utilizes SNAP / EBT through our farm business, I fully support HB 1236, especially in its merging of the Farm to School Network into COFSAC and bringing the council into the CDA purview. HB 1236 will both create and streamline greater opportunities for growers throughout the state. Our strengths as producers and advocates are found in the power and diversity of our alliances, and the merging of COFSAC with the Farm to School Network does just that. It makes established programs stronger by streamlining them and housing them where they should be, at the CDA.

We have tremendous opportunity to increase access to existing market channels such as federal food assistance programs, schools, and other institutional procurement options while also generating and building upon new ones. HB1236 will ensure the continuation and reconstitution of the COFSAC, which will assist in streamlining the connection between state and federal programs and agencies and in turn provide the support producers need to access new market channels and improve connection to existing channels.

Please support HB1236 so COFSAC can continue to work across all sectors of food and agriculture to help improve our businesses and economy.

Respectfully,

Mike Nolan