

March 26, 2010

Drew Newman
Legislative Counsel
Office of Council-member Mary M. Cheh
Council of the District of Columbia

Dear Citizens of The District of Columbia:

First and foremost I want to thank all of you who have taken on this monumental task of making the Healthy Schools Act a reality in a relatively short period of time.

I wish to speak to you as a farmer, but foremost as a father of three school age children. As a farmer we welcome the opportunity to help you, the City of DC to enhance your children's choices in the school lunch line. We know that school meals are the only nutritious meals if not the only meals some of your children receive all day. This is why I was glad to help out in last year's Local Flavor Week. It was fun and educational for me, a farmer in a rural area to visit some of your schools and hand out fresh watermelon and apples to your children.

I also want to thank Council-member Cheh and Drew Newman for having listening sessions and allowing me to come to DC and help with the Farm to School aspect of the Healthy Schools Act.

As a father, children need to know that not all foods are created equal and some are great for you and some should be left alone. Only through education about agriculture and nutrition will we be able to turn back the obesity clock that has been racing forward. School gardens and healthy cooking classes are great tools to educate in a fun and practical way that will leave an impression that will last a Healthy Lifetime. By incorporating more fresh and locally grown produce into school lunches, I believe that we can reach all children, to teach them that healthy choices now will lead them to a healthy future.

As the President of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association of Delaware, we will work with you to enhance your selection and quantities of fruits and vegetables. We believe that only through us having healthy children will our Country stay strong. A strong country must have the ability to feed its population and protect it. If our youth is not given these chances now our Country does not have a future.

Sincerely yours,
David Marvel