

Dear Governor,

My name is Leonard Dias, I have heard that you are thinking about cutting funding to Vocational programs like the FFA. I would like to tell about my experiences with FFA.

When I started in high school, I came from a very little K-8th grade school. I knew very few people in high school, but I joined the Hanford FFA. This organization and their dedicated instructors taught me to believe in myself, they taught me to set goals and dream big. I was not only told that by hard work and dedication I could achieve my goals, but I was also shown by the older kids in the program what could be achieved with hard work. FFA is not about learning how to be a farmer, or a dairyman. It is about learning to believe in ourselves and who we could be with hard work.

FFA taught me how to win, but most important, it also taught me how to lose gracefully, because in life we don't always get our way! It mainly taught me to never give up on myself or my community. In FFA, we are also taught how important it is to get involved with your community.

By my senior year in high school, I had the honor to be on a State Champion Cotton judging team, State Champion Agronomy team, I was elected President of my FFA chapter and had the honor to represent California as a delegate to the State and National FFA conventions. These experiences could never have happened if it were not for FFA.

FFA develops future leaders, and stresses the importance of education. I have seen the benefits of FFA over and over again in my life, for even though I did go into Agriculture, the lessons I learned and my experiences in FFA have continued to help me in my adult life. I took a chance and started my own business, now 20 years later I can say FFA helped play a major part in my success. FFA has meant a lot to me and I have been a big supporter in my adult life.

There are not many organizations that help children to see the potential in themselves and to help them to set their goals and show them how to work towards them like FFA. FFA is more than just a class at school. It's about dedicated Ag teachers who give their time and knowledge to the kids they teach beyond the classroom. This program has helped to keep many a child in school because they look forward to their shop classes. It's about what FFA brings out in the community from past "FFA kids" like myself who have seen the quality of young adults who have come out of the program, many who have gone to college and now are a vibrant part their communities. I have seen shy, awkward freshman who only because of their experiences in FFA have become leaders in the local chapters and go on to be leaders in their communities.

Governor, I know education is something you say you value, so please do not cut FFA Vocational funding, a proven program that continually produces well rounded, well educated young adults.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonard G. Dias". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Leonard G. Dias



Laton Future Farmers of America

Post Office Box 278
Laton, California 93242
(559)922-4108

Governor Brown,

my name is Daisy Hernandez and I am a member of the Laton chapter of future farmers of America. I live in a very small community in Fresno county. Agricultural in my community consist of tree, vine and forest crops where I have relatives and family that depend upon agriculture as their source of livelihood & income. More than 80,000 families in California are involved in Agricultural production while growing more than 400 different crops that make up more than 11.3% of the national economy.

In my own life my chapter advisor has made a positive impact on my life by I was able to participate in the opening and closing ceremony. I was never able to speak out in public until I participated in this. I was nervous at first to go up in front of other people but practicing helped me feel more confident. After I did the opening and closing ceremony I felt more confident about myself speaking in front of others. I am glad I had the opportunity to participate in opening and closing.

In closing, I encourage you to maintain funding for agricultural education. I sincerely hope that you understand the important impact that the FFA has had on me and its importance to California's.

Sincerely,

Daisy Hernandez

Hunter A. Brown
Flint Ave. 9680
Hanford, California 93230

December 1, 2013

Subject: Future Farmers of America

Governor Jerry Brown
C/O State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Dear Governor Brown,

I have been told that that state is considering cutting the funding of FFA in California. I am a second year member in the Hanford FFA program and to see the program be cut would truly be devastating. In my first two years of FFA I have learned a lot that an after school program or even classes could have never taught me. The FFA offers so much to the members that it helps them stay out of trouble and helps them build lifelong job skills that they may use in the adult world. I understand that the state is at need for money and has to make cuts, but to have the FFA program be gone would truly be a sad sight to see because of what it has done for our nation.

The FFA has changed the life I lived from the day I stepped foot in to my first agriculture class. I have lived in the country my whole live and worked with livestock and farming although without the FFA I would not be the agriculturist I am now. With Hanford FFA I have learned the art of judging cotton and understanding the hard work it takes to learn about something new. Cotton Judging not only taught me how to judge the white fluffy stuff in the field, but how to speak in front of someone. I took these skills to the next level with the Creed contest and competed at the state level competing against the best in the state of California. This took my world to a whole new level and allowing me to use my true talent. With the skills I learned I moved on to the parliamentary procedure team that bettered my debating skills and knowledge of how to run a proper meeting of the business world. I would like to become a lobbyist of the state of California to promote Agriculture and without this program I would not be able to do that. The FFA not only offers great knowledge, but the ability to go to college. I come from a middle income family and without FFA I don't know if I would be able to attend Cal Poly in the fall of 2016. So with the FFA being supported by the state it allows me to go beyond the boundaries of the classroom and discover what I really can do.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hunter A. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Hunter A. Brown