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Dear Members of the Jobs and Economic Development Committee,

As a VoCul Instructor at Healthy Roots Institute, I am writing to express my strong support for the Culinary Workforce Development Bill (S.F. 5181), which seeks crucial funding for the Healthy Roots Institute (HRI). This initiative is pivotal for the continuation and expansion of HRI's impactful work in our community, including the esteemed VoCul program.

The significance of this initiative cannot be overstated. It promises not only to enrich individuals with vital skills for the culinary industry but also to sow seeds of economic resilience and social cohesion within our community.

I am a current Instructor for the VoCul program. I have witnessed the great things this program offers. Including creating jobs and finding employment for the graduates. VoCul continues to offer support to its graduates in numerous ways. I myself am a product of the program and all that it offered after my graduation. I went on to work with other chefs create a business of my own while also working closely with Healthy Roots Institute. I recognize the growth in myself and others who have experienced this program. We work closely with many community leaders and programs offering classes and others different events. Healthy Roots Institute has been a great tool for the community during the years active, offering direct access to health education, healing, agriculture, and so much more.

I strongly urge your support for this initiative, confident in its capacity to make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of many and the culinary landscape of our state.

Thank you for considering this support. Together, we can contribute to a vibrant future for our community, marked by prosperity, inclusivity, and culinary excellence.

Sincerely,
Davenia Porter