

Submitter: Emily Jones

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2728

Dear Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Emily Jones. I am a farmer, resident and full time student in (Portland). I am writing to request your support for HB 2728.

HB 2728 supports the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, a SNAP matching program with a proven record of success. For every dollar spent on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm stands, CSA programs, and grocery stores across the state, shoppers will receive an additional dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

This program is important to me because I benefit from the program in a multitude of ways. As a full time student taking remote classes with Oregon State University I struggle to meet my basic needs. I work multiple jobs including running a gourmet mushroom farm with my partner. We work hard to feed ourselves and our community. Unfortunately, with rising costs of living including housing, transportation and food prices, this is incredibly difficult and nearly impossible.

I'm so grateful for SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB) because it increases my ability to buy healthy, fresh, seasonal produce. I save up my SNAP for the farmers markets because I know I get a much better value for my money with the matching DUFEB. I love buying from farmers directly, small-scale operations that truly care how our food is produced. Unfortunately, there are so many issues with our national and global food systems. Many of which are highlighted in my sustainability and horticulture classes. I try hard not to vote with my dollar for food that is produced with extractive practices or underpaid labor. We all have to live.

In addition to benefiting from DUFEB in my personal consumption of food, I also benefit as an urban farmer. The gourmet mushrooms I produce are available to SNAP members with DUFEB supporting part of the cost of their share. This makes my product more accessible to low income folks like myself. Over half of my CSA members pay using SNAP/DUFEB. I also sell at a farmer's market over the summer. DUFEB has made a huge difference in my business and ability to make a profit. I grow a wide variety of vegetable plant starts which many folks purchase using DUFEB. I love knowing that I have helped support someone else in their mission of food sovereignty and independence.

Numerous studies reference the benefits of eating food grown without hazardous chemicals including herbicides, pesticides, and volatile fertilizers. Our soil and water systems benefit too. Eating locally grown food in season is one of the best ways to improve your overall health outcomes. DUFB makes this possible for people regardless of income status. Unfortunately, the only thing that doesn't seem to be going up in price is the cost of labor. Wages remain stagnant while basic human needs continue to increase until they are out of reach. DUFB helps level the playing field.

Please, I urge you to support HB 2728 to continue to make food accessible to myself and those I grow for.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Sincerely,  
Emily Jones

Portland, OR