

Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lucie Gouin. I am a farmer in Scio, 30 miles east of Salem. My husband and I run an organic vegetable farm called La Terra Vita. We accept Double-Up Food Bucks as payment at our market stall and will be accepting them this year for our subscription shares.

I am asking for your support for House Bill 2728.

We have been growing organic vegetables for 15 years. It is a rewarding calling – but a tough profession to make ends meet. In the early years of establishing our farm, we benefited from the support of an amazing Salem resident. Her name was Carolee Eastman. She did something absolutely remarkable. Every Saturday, she would visit market in the last half hour before vendors broke down. She would come to our stall and buy *all* the produce we had left! This she repeated at several other stalls. Then she and her husband would deliver the produce door-to-door around Salem to people they knew could use the extra food.

Until she passed away, Carolee helped countless families around Salem put nutritious food on their tables. At the same time, Carolee gave us hope every week that we would stay afloat and that our work was useful. We'll always be grateful to her and her husband, Bob.

Incredibly, this is exactly what the Double-Up Food Buck matching program does. It's a WIN-WIN investment for Oregon. Double-Up Food Bucks encourage SNAP participants to seek out the freshest and healthiest food. As a result, we local Oregon growers benefit from extra income. Ultimately, that's also a win for all Oregon taxpayers because it strengthens our local economy and good nutrition stretches our health tax dollars that little bit further.

We love growing delicious produce, we love that people who need it get to have access to it. Double-Up Food Bucks makes a massive difference to so many people in the food chain, including me, the farmer. Please support full funding of DUFB through HB 2728.