

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

My name is Meghan Verberkmoes. I am a farmers market manager in Eugene, OR. I am writing to request your support for **HB 2728**.

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

This program is important to me because for several years I have seen firsthand the incredible impact it has had on our farmers market, our local farmers, and our community. The Double Up Food Bucks program empowers SNAP participants to choose healthy foods, it has substantially increased sales for our farmers, and has expanded our customer base. The program has brought so many people to the market that had never shopped at a farmers market before, and has made them 'regulars'. We hear at the market, over and over again, what a difference this program makes in our customers' ability to buy locally grown foods, and how DUFB allows them to try new fruits and vegetables, and increases their overall consumption of healthy food. Our community members are proud to be able to support local farmers, and DUFB has made that possible for so many more people in the community.

In 2021 the amount of Double Up Food Bucks distributed at our market nearly doubled. And we saw a significant increase in DUFB distribution again in 2022, which was our biggest year ever for SNAP/DUFB distribution. Our community, both shoppers and farmers, have come to rely on this program as an important source of healthy food, and an important source of income. As we see inflation and the cost of food rising, this program is more important than ever.

I ask you to support HB 2728, and to fully fund the bill before the Oregon Legislature adjourns. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Meghan Verberkmoes
Eugene, OR