

Submitter: Olivia Spitzer  
On Behalf Of: Hillsdale Farmers Market  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

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

My name is Olivia Spitzer. I am a farmers market manager in Portland, 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 gives individuals with SNAP and EBT cash benefits more money to spend, by matching up to \$20 of their SNAP/EBT withdrawal at the market. At first glance, this may not seem vital to our market specifically, as Hillsdale does not qualify as a low income area. That being said, the Census Bureau reports that 25.5% of all Multnomah county residents were eligible for SNAP between 2017 - 2019. There are low income households in every community and their reduced visibility only means the services we offer them are even more needed. When the government expanded SNAP benefits as a COVID 19 relief measure, our market saw a dramatic upturn in SNAP and EBT spending. With the expiration of these additional benefits in March 2023, SNAP/EBT spending has decreased. This indicates that the desire to shop at the farmers' market is there, but the problem is a lack of resources to do so. We know that there are shoppers in Hillsdale who need government funds to feed their families - we want to make it easy and comfortable for them to spend those funds with their local farmers. The more folks who know about this program, the more low income individuals will shop the market. They will be shopping with more money than they could use at the grocery store. This results in more food going into low-income homes, and more funds going directly to farmers.

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.

Olivia Spitzer, Portland, OR