

Submitter: Melissa Brown

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure: SB 5526

Co-chair Campos, Co-Chair Valderrama, and members of the committee. My name is Melissa Brown and I represent The KIVA Grocery & Deli in Eugene. I am here to express support for continued funding of the Double Up Food Bucks program in Senate Bill 5526. SB 5526 supports the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, a SNAP matching program.

Double Up has connected SNAP participants with Oregon-grown produce, facilitating almost \$19 million in SNAP and Double Up sales since 2016. In 2024, over \$6 million in Oregon labor income was generated due to the additional spending enabled by Double Up.

The past decade has been tough for those facing food insecurity. According to a 2023 study conducted by Food For Lane County, 68% of Lane County respondents reported experiencing hunger. The Double Up program helps over 1,600 unique SNAP shoppers buy fruits and vegetables at my store each month. Additionally, the DUFEB program supports city, county, and state investments and aids residents in nearby affordable housing (senior, family and no-barrier among them). It also attracts more visitors into Eugene's struggling downtown core.

We have the daily privilege of hearing about the ways the program helps from customers, such as Lindsey, a mother of two small children in Eugene:

"With DUFEB, my children can eat healthy and receive essential nutrients, leading to improved performance in school. It has also allowed me to eat healthier too and be a better mother."

Continued investment in Double Up by the State is crucial to leveraging federal matching dollars and expanding the program's impact. As a small business owner and a taxpaying community member, I urge you to fully fund the Double Up Food Bucks program within SB 5526.

Sincerely,

Melissa Brown

The KIVA Grocery & Deli, Owner

Eugene, Oregon

"Is Food Insecurity on the Rise in Lane County? Posted February 1, 2024"

<https://www.foodforlanecounty.org/is-food-insecurity-on-the-rise-in-lane-county/>

