

Submitter: Deborah Leff
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

I strongly support funding for the Double Up Food Bucks program. It is a godsend. I participate in the program at the Medford Food Coop, and at the Rogue Valley Growers Market. The program allows me to eat fresh local organic produce, which I could not previously access due to cost. I believe this makes a big difference in my wellness as I carefully eat a diet predominantly of fresh vegetables and fruit due to medical conditions, and over the years I've seen my poor health improve. Diet is a key component of good health.

An additional benefit is that this program allows me to support our local organic farmers, by making their produce affordable for me to purchase at the farmer's market. This is extremely important not only to the local economy and for local employment, but also because it helps retain the fertile agricultural land of our valley by keeping farmers in business. There are housing and business developments being built on farmland all the time due to farmers' rising costs and low profits forcing them to sell their land. Once that farmland is lost, it is gone forever.

The big federal subsidies for massive corn, wheat and soy mega farms are not available to small farmers. Those monocrop farms are notorious for destroying the soil, and increasing pest infestations and "super" weeds, causing companies to rely on high doses of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, with ensuing health ramifications for farm employees, neighbors and consumers. It's the small farms that will save our agricultural health and diversity, and need to be supported as the backbone of the community.