



April 22, 2025

Senator Jeff Golden and Representative Pam Marsh and other relative members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Nickole Schulz. I am a Farmers Market Manager in Ashland and Medford for Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Market. I am writing to request your support for SB5526. The bill is currently in the Joint Ways & Means Committee, and I urge you to take action to fund this bill before the Legislature adjourns.

**SB5526** 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 stands, grocery stores, and CSAs across the state, shoppers will receive an additional dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

The cost of food continues to rise which impacts communities already facing disparities the hardest. Double Up Food Bucks is a perfect investment as we work to stabilize Oregon post-pandemic, serving an immediate need of feeding people while investing in local farmers and local economies - an incredible triple win.

Serving our community I hear first hand how supportive these nutrition programs are for not only SNAP recipients but also our local farmers! This program creates economic viability for smaller local producers. With the rising cost of groceries we have seen an uptick in people shopping at the market for the first time stating that their bonus and double up programs make shopping locally financially viable and commercially competitive based on grocery store prices.

These programs are a lifeline to many of our farmers and even more members of our community who are on fixed income or are growing their family in a challenging economic environment.

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

Sincerely,

Nickole Schulz

Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Market

Ashland and Medford, OR

