



133 SW 2nd Ave, Suite 201 • Portland, OR 97204 • (503) 497-1000 • www.friends.org

Southern Oregon Office • PO Box 2442 • Grants Pass, OR 97528 • (541) 474-1155

Willamette Valley • 494 Willamette St, Suite 213 • Eugene, OR 97401 • (503) 497-1000 x8

19 February 2019

Chair Gelser
Senate Committee on
Human Services
State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 727

Dear Chair Gelser and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 727 and HB 2873. 1000 Friends of Oregon is a nonprofit, membership organization that has worked with Oregonians for more than 40 years to support livable urban and rural communities; protect family farms, forests and natural areas; and provide transportation and housing choices.

We created our Food Systems Program in 2015 to expand our work with partner organizations throughout the state who are working together to build and strengthen robust and healthy food systems across Oregon. These bills are supported by many of those partners because they simultaneously address multiple issues within those food systems.

A shocking number of Oregonians cannot afford all the food they need to be healthy. According to the Department of Human Services, more than 600,000 Oregonians, one-third of those children, depend on SNAP benefits to acquire some of that food. At the same time, small and medium sized farmers across the state struggle to bring produce to limited markets.

The Double Up Food Bucks program this funding will support has a proven record of success, and both the health and the economic benefits are well-documented. Matching SNAP benefits redeemed at local growers markets increases the purchasing power of food-insecure Oregonians, while at the same time incentivizing people to spend locally, supporting farmers and markets across the state. Those farmers then become stronger participants in their own local economies.

We urge you to support SB 727 and HB 2873. Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Holmes".

Greg Holmes
Food Systems Program Director
1000 Friends of Oregon