

**James Beard  
PUBLIC  
MARKET**

March 25, 2019

The Honorable Lee Beyer  
The Honorable Rob Nosse  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services  
Oregon Legislature  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: In Support of WIC and Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Programs – Senate Bill 5526

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair Nosse, and members of the Committee:

The Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farm Direct Nutrition Program (FDNP) and Senior FDNP are essential safety net programs that protect vulnerable Oregonians from nutrition insecurity. In 2018, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) issued program vouchers to 54,000 WIC mothers and children, and 47,800 low-income seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables direct from Oregon farmers.

Without additional state funding, 20,000 fewer nutritionally at-risk mothers and their children would be able to access fresh produce in 2020. The Senior FDNP would be effectively eliminated due to spending limitations of the matching federal grant which make state funding essential to defray the costs of certification and benefit distribution.

Additionally, these programs support rural economic development by providing increased income for Oregon farmers. Six-hundred-plus Oregon farmers earned nearly \$3.2 million from the programs in 2017-2018.

James Beard Public Market, a project of The Historic Portland Public Market Foundation, is making plans to develop on the campus of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Operating as a non-profit organization, the Public Market will showcase the quality and diversity of Oregon's farming and food economy. It will host 50-plus independent businesses selling Oregon food, provide unique economic development opportunities, help bridge the urban-rural divide, and create a destination that will promote agri-tourism and support the development of local community food systems.

The core values adopted by the Board of Trustees of James Beard Public Market include a commitment to addressing food insecurity and providing access to healthy, nutritious food for the Public Market's low-income customers. All vendors will welcome SNAP benefits and, with the Public Market facilitating other nutrition assistance programs, customers from all income levels will have access to affordable, fresh, and healthy foods.

For these reasons, we offer our support for maintaining funding for the WIC and Senior FDNPs. We encourage the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services to support funding for the WIC and Senior FDNPs at the levels requested by Oregon Food Bank.

Very truly yours,



Fred M. Granum  
Executive Director  
James Beard Public Market