

Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mike Elliott. I am the Board President for Farmers Market Fund (FMF) and am writing to request your support for **SB 440 & SB 555**.

SB 555 and SB 440 support the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon (DUFBO), a SNAP incentive program with a proven record of success. FMF administers Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, which matches purchases on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm share programs, and grocery stores across the state.

I originally joined the Board of FMF four years ago because I believe strongly in its mission and recognized the multi-faceted benefits of the model. Matching SNAP purchases of fruits and vegetables makes healthier food more accessible to underserved Oregonians, while also providing an economic boost to small Oregon farmers and helping local communities thrive.

Surveys of program participants show that DUFBO changes lives. In 2020:

- 93% of SNAP shoppers purchased more fresh produce as a result of the match,
- 87% of DUFBO users had more food in their house as a result of the program, and
- 86% felt an improvement in their overall health!

Food insecurity has nearly doubled since the start of the pandemic. In fact, today 1 in 4 Oregonians are food insecure (the highest rate in a century!) and more than 700,000 Oregonians depend on SNAP. Furthermore, long-standing structural inequities have ensured that the pandemic's public health and economic impacts fall more heavily on people of color, immigrants and refugees, single parents and caregivers, and our trans and gender non-conforming neighbors – many of whom serve in essential, front-line roles within our healthcare and food systems.

Not surprisingly, the increase in food insecurity has created a dramatic increase in demand for the DUFBO program; at FMF we see that increase firsthand. *State funding has been a critical element to helping us meet this demand.* In addition to the direct value provided by state funding, FMF was able to leverage Oregon's \$1.5 Million investment in DUFBO from 2019 to secure \$1.9 million in federal funding through the federal USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program.

Given the tremendous success and effectiveness of the DUFBO program and the growing need for funding, I hope that you will support **SB 440 and SB 555**. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Mike Elliott
Portland