

Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joe McNeill. I am a grocery store owner and DUFB partner in Fossil. I am writing to request your support for SB 440 & 555.

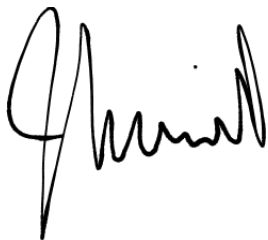
SB 555 and SB 440 support the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, a SNAP incentive program with a proven record of success. For every dollar spent on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm share programs, and grocery stores across the state, shoppers will receive a dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

This program is important to me and to my community of Fossil. With little effort by the shopper, a family can be provided twice the number of healthy fruits and vegetables than they would normally be able to. In a low-income county like ours, that can go a long way.

With COVID-19 impacting our community this past year, the Fossil Merc has become essential to providing healthy food options for families. There are no other shopping options in our area. It is a 90-minute drive to the nearest "city". Our residents need a local option. With the help of DUFB, we have been able to provide that option to Wheeler County.

Since offering DUFB in our store for the first time this summer, we have seen a 30% increase in produce sales from two year ago. This has benefited the store with increased profits, which has allowed us to add another employee. A big deal for a county with not a lot of employment options. Equally important, our community also gets the benefit of a healthy food option for their families at a discounted price.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe McNeill', written in a cursive style.

Joe McNeill

Owner, Fossil Mercantile Company

Fossil, Oregon