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www.firstalt.coop

February 3, 2023.

House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and members of the committee,

My name is Cindee Lolik. I am a general manager at First Alternative Co-Op in Corvallis. I am writing to request your support for **HB 2728**. Being on the front lines of the grocery business, our staff has seen the positive impact that this program has had on our SNAP customers since its adoption at our stores. This has benefitted not only our Double Up Food Bucks customers but has also aided our local farmers as we are able to sell even more of their locally grown produce because of the program.

The Co-op feels that this program is going to be even more crucial in the next year and going forward due to both inflation and the fact that SNAP benefits are set to be reduced from pandemic levels at the end of February. Losing this benefit would be an additional blow to the nutritional food available to our SNAP customers.

We strongly encourage your support for HB 2728 to allow for its expansion in the next year to ensure that folks continue to have access to fresh fruits and vegetables; our local farmers continue to thrive and sell their produce in our community and our local economy is more robust all around.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions. I can be reached at 541-230-3189 or cindee@firstalt.coop.

In cooperation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindee Lolik".

Cindee Lolik
General Manager