

Submitter: Linea Brink Andersen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2728

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Linea Brink Andersen. I am a resident of Walton, OR, and a farmer in Veneta, OR. I am writing to request your support for HB 2728.

HB 2728 supports the expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon, a SNAP matching program with a proven record of success. For every dollar spent on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers' markets, farm stands, CSA programs, and grocery stores across the state, shoppers will receive an additional dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

The DUFEB program is important to me because it secures vital income for our farm (about 10% of our farmers market income in 2022 came in the form of DUFEB). But more importantly, it allows us to put fresh, local foods into the hands of food-insecure members of our community. With the rising costs of production and thereby pricing, it is ever-more important for our farm to keep working to make our food as accessible as possible while securing our own financial stability. The DUFEB program is a very important program to this aim.

The benefits of the DUFEB are manifold. It secures farm income, it increases financial accessibility to nutritious produce for SNAP receivers, and it boosts local economies by shortening the distance between consumer and producer.

In 2022, we vended at two Oregon farmers' markets that both were able to offer DUFEB matching to all SNAP customers at the market.

At our local market in Veneta, I notice that the most consistent and recurring market-goers are those who use SNAP/DUFEB. This tells me that this program is important to them and their weekly grocery shopping. It also means that as a farmer, this program ensures consistent market turn-out, which is important for our crop planning, as well as our financial planning.

In 2023, we look forward to adding a SNAP/DUFEB offering for our CSA program through the organization PNWCSEA, which is working to make CSAs accessible to food-insecure people around Oregon. A CSA offers so many health benefits to its members, as it ensures the consumption of fruits and vegetables, and encourages members to cook from scratch. We are pleased that the DUFEB program increases the financial accessibility to such CSA programs as ours.

Ultimately, we farm because we wish to offer our community access to delicious and nutritious produce, and the DUFEB program is a huge asset in letting us work towards

that goal.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Linea Brink Andersen

Walton, Oregon