

Chair Reynolds and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joe McNeill. I am the owner of the Fossil Mercantile in Fossil, 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.

This program is important to me because it has made an impact to my community. Fossil is a very isolated community. It takes hours to get to a larger city. Having a reliable source of fresh fruits and vegetables within town is essential for maintaining the health of our residents. The Double Up Food Bucks Oregon program has helped tremendously with residents with food insecurities. It has also helped expand my produce department and offer fruits and vegetables that a may not have before.

These past few years have been challenging. The cost of food increased by over 10% in 2022, which impacted communities already facing disparities the hardest. Many Oregonians will be losing pandemic-related food assistance after this month. Double Up Food Bucks is one important way we can support community members struggling to afford food, invest in Oregon's farmers, and support local economies.

Passing HB 2728 would mean that more Oregonians participating in SNAP would have access to fruits and vegetables. It means more grocery stores, farmers markets, and more CSAs in more corners of the state can participate.

**I urge your support for HB 2728.**

Joe McNeill

Fossil, Oregon