

Submitter: Alison Hensley
On Behalf Of: Funding the Double Up Food Bucks program
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Co-Chair Steiner, Co-Chair Sanchez, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alison Hensley. I am the Executive Director for the Rogue Valley Food System Network, an organization that exists to build resilient, ecologically sound and economically viable food systems in Southern Oregon. I am writing to request your support for HB 2728.

HB 2728 supports 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.

RVFSN helped bring into our area the first grant funded dollars to support the Double Up Food Bucks in 2017. This program saw huge benefit and triple bottom line impact from the very first year. More healthy local foods to the populations of greatest need, greater attendance at the local markets, and increased sales for our local farmers. The DUFB is a no brainer way to support the rural populations who are the most food insecure in accessing the healthiest foods, while encouraging local dollars to stay local. The state support for this program has allowed the program to expand and flourish, taking the burden of fundraising off of the already at capacity farmers market managers. Funding this bill is especially needed at this moment. For 2 years food insecure families have had the additional monthly benefits of the pandemic EBT supplement. In March, those extra benefits ended, which has added an increased burden to families, through expansion of the DUFB program, a family could double their benefits at any one of the 5 weekly markets that offer DUFB, a total of an additional potential \$100 spent on local fresh food.

In the Applegate Valley 2 new smaller farmers markets have started since 2020, it is just this year that we were able to get those markets to a point of accepting DUFB, and we are excited about the prospect of supporting our rural, food insecure communities through this program, as well as bolstering overall economic development, and the overall success of rural farmers markets.

I ask you to support HB 2728, and to fully fund the bill before the Oregon Legislature adjourns. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Alison Hensley, Applegate, OR