

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

I am submitting my 'script' which I had hoped to submit in person in Newport on March 14th, but alas, my name was not called. Imagine passion, inflection, and tone when you read this please! Thank you for your service and your consideration of continuing to feed Oregonians!

Support of HB2728

Good evening Committee, and thank you for hosting the Road Show tonight. I am Janel Lajoie, and I am the Vice-President of Bountiful Backyard, a 501(c)(3), and Manager of the Philomath Farmers' Market in Benton County. Hello Sen. Gelser Blouin and Rep. Gomberg - it's good to see you. I am here to ask all of you for your support for HB2728.

Currently, when a shopper spends up to \$20 on SNAP eligible food at our market, Double-Up Food Bucks (DUFb) matches that. From what I understand, HB2728 preserves - or renews that funding. That is an additional \$20 each week that each person with a SNAP card can use to buy fresh fruits and vegetables produced right in our community! From the shoppers perspective, it is a 'free' \$20.

Farmers' Markets stimulate local economies - all our farmers grow their produce within about 10 miles of our market! Every food dollar - whether paper, SNAP, or DUFb - spent at the market goes right back to those farmers - that strengthens our local economy and increases our farmers' sales!

Farmers markets increase accessibility to and availability of fresh nutritious foods. By supporting this bill, you are supporting healthier communities - especially for people who are food insecure! When folx can walk to the market - in a town without a grocery store - and take home delicious, beautiful, colorful produce - grown by someone from their community - that's something special. But when we can **double** the amount of wholesome food our shoppers take home with DUFb, we are strengthening individuals and families, and that, in turn, strengthens our community and economy!

I could tell you a lot of stories, but numbers talk too! (Here is where I had a lovely bar graph to show you - drawn on a manila folder no less - that's our budget!) 😊

These are figures for the Philomath Farmers' Market

2021

SNAP - \$ 1,120

DUFB - \$ 0 - Markets cannot accept DUFB until they have been accepting SNAP for a year.

2022

SNAP - **\$ 3,420**

DUFB - **\$ 2,970**

...and this was part of over \$ 3M spent in SNAP and DUFB in 2022 - THANK YOU for the funding in 2021!.

So HB2728 is a monetary investment in DUFB for sure. But the bigger picture is that this bill is an investment in healthy **economies, farmers, families, and communities** across Oregon!

By supporting this bill, you are also supporting: Sustainability. Rural Farmland and Livelihoods. Friendships. Our Communities. Our Economies.

By supporting HB2728 you are supporting me. My Family. My Market. My Farmers. My Community.

I ask you to support HB 2728, and to fully fund the bill before the Oregon Legislature adjourns.

Janel L. Lajoie

Philomath, Oregon