

Submitter: Patrick Franks  
On Behalf Of: Coos Head Food Co-Op  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

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

My name is Patrick Franks. I am the General Manager for Coos Head Food Co-Op in the North Bend/Coos Bay area. I am writing to request your support for HB 2728.

Living in a rural coastal town has many challenges. From young families struggling to find housing or a job, to our elders living on a fixed income, their limited cash resources must be carefully utilized to provide shelter, childcare services, and/or transportation. These vulnerable community members are dependent on support from the SNAP program to keep themselves nourished. When the emergency covid-19 benefits were cut back in February, along with the inflationary prices for groceries, a number of these community members expressed anxiety and fear for how they will feed their families and themselves quality, organic, and wholesome produce. When I heard from these community members, my customers, I found myself in the position to help. The Double Up Food Buck program was expanding its reach beyond the farmer's market, and I knew I had to get this program started at the co-op before their benefits were cut. Since launching this program, we have had over 750 customer transactions supporting their need for quality, organic, wholesome produce. But, this is only the beginning. As the trajectory of our economy continues to make it more and more challenging to live in rural Oregon, the need for support is only going to increase.

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.

Patrick Franks  
North Bend/Coos Bay