



Good evening,

My name is Megan Foucht and I'm the Board Chair of the Baker City Farmers Market. I'm joining you this evening to voice my support for HB 2728.

Located about an hour north of here, Baker City just passed the 10,000-person mark in the 2020 census. We're a small town with a great community spirit.

As of the last census, Baker City saw a 15 percent poverty rate among its citizens. According to data from the Oregon Hunger Task Force, Baker County beats the state by two percentage points—13% compared to 11%—for food insecure residents. We beat the state by 5% when it comes to children who are food insecure: 19%. That's nearly 2 out of every 10 kids.

Last year was my first as a member of the Baker City Farmers Market Board, and one of my favorite activities was telling our customers about the great benefits of the Double Up Food Bucks program. And I experienced a range of reactions from our SNAP and DUFEB customers: Some were excited and experienced with the program. Others were shy, unsure, or even ashamed, and whispered their request for SNAP and DUFEB currency so as not to be overheard. Many came with their children.

The Baker City Farmers Market has been in operation since 2002, and we have been participating in the Double Up Food Bucks program since 2020. Since then, we've seen a 67% increase in the number of shoppers who are utilizing this program. It's our goal to provide a warm, welcoming, and dignified shopping experience for our Double Up Food Bucks customers. This program feels like a real gift we are able to give our community.

I want to voice especial appreciation and support for the work of the Oregon Farmers Market Association and the Farmers Market Fund. I'm a volunteer, and the support, encouragement, and resources they offer are so invaluable. Our city needs this program, and we can't do it without that incredible team.

Thank you for your time and your service.

Megan Foucht
Baker City Farmers Market