

Submitter: Laurie Nadeau
On Behalf Of: Funding the Double Up Food Bucks program
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Hello and thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I have lived in Portland since 2008 and used SNAP benefits several times, nearly all of them while working one or two jobs. I have worked in retail, as well as in the role of a nanny and childcare professional, working as a teacher of young children. I am currently employed as an independent contractor with no benefits as an office manager for local private practice doctor. While I have been in respectable, public-serving positions in Portland time and again, these jobs are often low paying, with little to no paid time off, no or few sick days, no healthcare benefits and very limited raises. SNAP benefits have played a critical role in keeping me from food and housing crisis at times when my job(s) didn't meet the demands of rising cost of living.

The Double Up Food Bucks program has similarly been a lifeline while living under the poverty level. Providing added benefit to an individual's SNAP funds through produce and healthy food choices, I have been able to keep my food expenses at a reasonable portion of my budget, while shopping for organic, nutritious, vitamin-rich foods. Being a person with severe food allergies and numerous health issues, eating as clean a diet without processed foods or additives keeps me health and my health concerns from ballooning into autoimmune disease. The people who provide countless services in this creative, lively city we love need essential services like Double Up Food Bucks to live healthy lives on very little income.

Thank you,
Laurie Nadeau