

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

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

My name is Destin Brown, and I am the Executive Director Hillsboro Farmers Markets. I am writing to request your support for the Double Up Food Bucks program within the Department of Human Services agency budget (SB 5526).

The Self Sufficiency portion of SB5526 supports continuation 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 receive a dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

This program is vital to our community. At Hillsboro Farmers Markets, we serve approximately 4,500 visitors per market day, with a significant portion using SNAP/EBT benefits. The Double Up Food Bucks program has been instrumental in helping these families stretch their food dollars while accessing fresh, locally grown produce.

The impact of rising food costs has been particularly challenging for our SNAP customers. Double Up Food Bucks has become a crucial lifeline, enabling families to maintain access to nutritious foods despite inflation. The program not only benefits our SNAP customers but also supports our local farmers, who receive fair compensation for their produce. With 40% of our 125 vendors being farmers, this program creates a vital economic multiplier effect in our rural communities.

The 2023 state funding allowed us to maintain consistent SNAP matching throughout our market season, providing reliability that our customers could count on. This predictability has been crucial for both our SNAP customers planning their food budgets and our farmers planning their crop production.

I ask you to fully fund the Double Up Food Bucks program within the Department of Human Services agency budget (SB 5526) before the Oregon Legislature adjourns. This investment will continue to strengthen food security, support local agriculture, and build healthier communities across Oregon.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Destin Brown
Hillsboro, Oregon