

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

My name is Lucinda Klicker. I am a farmers market manager in Portland. 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 will receive a dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

This program is important to me because as a farmers market manager distributing over \$1,000 in Double Up Food Bucks at every market, I have personally seen the Double Up Food Bucks program change lives. I would like to take a moment to share three stories that have especially impacted my understanding of the Double Up Food Bucks' effect on its participants.

At our farmers market, our deepest customer relationships and some of our most dependable shoppers come from people who are currently receiving SNAP. Each week we hear the testimonies of our shoppers and what the Double Up Food Bucks at the market means to them. One shopper in particular started attending the market on a weekly basis during the pandemic when they were at extreme risk of serious illness from covid. They showered us in gratitude for providing access to healthy vegetables and stretching their dollars with DUFB. They became a weekly shopper and built strong relationships with our vendors and volunteers that helped create a sense of community during an especially isolated time. Now, 3 years later they are still a weekly shopper going home with fresh produce each week. Over the years their 'Why' has shifted from a safe place to shop, to a place where they feel that they have community, now to a place where their dollar can go further with the \$20 match, and now to a full on shift in having a healthier life and richer knowledge for cooking and for the local food system.

Another way that Double Up Food Bucks has transformed our market is through our farmers. Our farmers are of the most insecure and vulnerable vendors at the market. For our farmers, things like extreme and unpredictable weather conditions, high gas prices, inflation, pest control, and so much more can have a huge impact on their ability to come to market and sell their perishable foods. With the Double Up Food Bucks program, our farmers are able to see more profit and keep their farms running to serve their customers. Perhaps the most noticeable moment of seeing the success of the program at the market was in September, 2021 when the DUFB match increased from \$10 to \$20. In the span of just a couple weeks we saw our farm vendors nearly double their profits and end markets with more sold out signs than they had all

season. The DUFB dollars go straight into the hard working hands of the food systems that are necessary for the health of our ecosystem and the health of our community.

Lastly, I would like to share a personal story of my significant other finally finding the courage to enroll in SNAP because of the Double Up Food Bucks program. For years my partner has struggled to have his needs met due to financial and employment impacts. It was solely because of the community and joy that was built at the market around Double Up Food Bucks that he un-learned his stigmas of SNAP. Now he feels unashamed to use his EBT card in public and feels inspired to connect with his local food growers by attending farmers markets. He has even taken it upon himself to spread the word about DUFB far and wide to our friends and family who may use SNAP, and wants to make sure as many people benefit from the program as possible.

There are countless ways that the Double Up Food Bucks have transformed the lives of Oregonians, but I hope this has given a look into the big ways it has deeply impacted our small scale farmers market community.

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. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Lucinda Klicker
Portland, OR