

The Honorable Marvin Abney House Committee on Finance Rhode Island General Assembly 82  
Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

**SUBJECT: Support for House Resolution 7258**

Dear Chair Abney and Members of the Committee:

The Mount Hope Farm Farmers Market wishes to voice its strong support for **House Resolution 7258**, a resolution making an appropriation of \$200,000 for incentives for fruits and vegetables sold at participating Bonus Bucks outlets in Rhode Island. We thank Representative Donovan for introducing this measure and the committee for the opportunity to submit testimony.

The Bonus Bucks program at Mount Hope Farm ensures that food-insecure residents in and around Bristol have access to fresh, local produce year-round. We serve numerous regular customers who rely on this program to purchase vegetables each week—a partnership that benefits both our community members and our local farmers.

House Resolution 7258 authorizes \$200,000 for the Farm Fresh Bonus Bucks Program. Bonus Bucks expand upon USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits by matching funds for the purchase of nutritious, locally grown fruits and vegetables. These incentives are offered at farmers markets, farm stands, and delivery programs across Rhode Island. This vital program makes healthy food accessible and affordable for low-income families by doubling the value of SNAP dollars spent on locally sourced produce.

The majority of SNAP benefits support households with children, older adults, or individuals with disabilities. The Farm Fresh Bonus Bucks Program addresses a critical need as families in our state struggle to put healthy food on the table. By reducing food insecurity and promoting farm viability, this funding has a dual impact: it helps families afford healthier options while supporting the local agricultural economy. Furthermore, shoppers often receive ideas and recipes on how to prepare produce in cost-effective, easy ways.

A person's income should not be a barrier to accessing locally grown produce. This program removes that barrier and allows families to shop in a friendly, community-focused environment.

Please support House Resolution 7258 and include \$200,000 in the FY27 Budget for the Farm Fresh Bonus Bucks Program. Your support will ensure continued access to fresh fruits and vegetables for Rhode Islanders struggling to feed their families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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