



SOUTHSIDE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

May 14, 2026

State of RI House Finance Committee

Re: HB 7258

I am writing on behalf of Southside Community Land Trust in support of HB 7258 to use state funds for the RI Bonus Bucks program. Bonus Bucks is currently supported by the USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive program which requires \$1 for \$1 matching of federal funds. So, every dollar you commit to this program will be matched by at least \$1 from the federal government. This is a great investment at a time when the federal government is continuing to cut, cut, cut programs that support people who need help with the ever increasing day-to-day costs of just maintaining a household.

Southside Community Land Trust supports Rhode Islanders to have ownership and power over food systems that offer culturally familiar, locally produced, affordable, and healthy food by working toward equitable access to land and markets, providing education, and fostering opportunities to grow food in environmentally sustainable ways.

This is also an investment in local farms and our local food system. Bonus Bucks are used to purchase fresh and healthy food from local farmers and help make that food affordable for low income families. We know that when Rhode Islanders are in control of the farms and other food businesses that feed Rhode Island, we can make sure that more of our families are being fed the foods that they want to eat and need to survive.

Please pass this bill out of committee this session!

Margaret DeVos
Executive Director