

Adrienne Lee
Knox
LD 468

Testimony of Adrienne Lee of Knox before the 132st Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Dear members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry.

My name is Adrienne Lee, of Knox ME. I want to express my strong support of LD 468 – An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food.

My husband and I own and operate New Beat Farm a vegetable farm who sells at the Belfast Farmers Market as well as one of the owners of Daybreak Growers Alliance, a local food distribution business that helps to distribute locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables to food insecure Mainers across the State.

I helped to start the Belfast Markets SNAP/EBT program over 10 years ago and in that time have seen the positive impact of the Maine Harvest Bucks and other Nutrition Incentive Programs at the market. This program has made shopping for local fresh fruits and vegetables more of a financial reality for a broader group of our community members, increased the amount of fresh fruits and veggies that they incorporate into their families diet and have also increases sales for our farm and for our farmers market vendors as a whole.

This is too important of a program to Maine residents to have to rely on federal funding to support it, and instead should have a certain, continual amount of funding to be dedicated in the States budget. It is clear that the time is now to have the State take on a larger role in ensuring local food security for all Mainers. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.