



Testimony of, Elizabeth Alvarez, resident of Winterport, in support of LD 2093 - An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food.

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

My name is Elizabeth Alvarez, I am a resident of Winterport, and I am here today as a Shopper to express my support of LD 2093 - An Act to Address Food Insecurity by Helping Maine Residents Access Locally Produced Food.

I am a single mother who struggles to make ends meet. Having the ability to access Farmers Markets with SNAP/EBT dollars has been such a privilege. Having access to locally grown healthy food truly means a great deal to my children and I.

Maine Harvest Bucks is an incredible blessing because my money extends further than the typical value it has at big chain grocers. It gives me a better opportunity to provide high quality produce to my family.

My 7 year old daughter loves to receive Maine Harvest Bucks! It's an early lesson on financial literacy, essentially giving her a budget to manage each time we shop at a farmers market. Having this opportunity is also teaching her about the farm to table process. She gets to communicate with farmers first hand, ask questions, and see the beauty of farmers as hardworking community members.

Choosing to continue funding programs like Maine Harvest Bucks by voting yes on LD-2093 ensures that struggling families like mine have access to healthy food options, while simultaneously strengthening Maine's economy from shopping local.