

132nd Legislature
Senate
of Maine
Senate District 32

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Testimony of Senator Henry Ingwersen introducing
**LD 2004, An Act to Enhance Support of Local Nutrition Incentive Programs
by Modifying the Eligibility Requirements of the Fund to Address Food
Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives**

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
Wednesday, January 7, 2026

Senator Talbot Ross, Representative Pluecker and Esteemed Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, my name is Henry Ingwersen, and I proudly represent Senate District 32, which includes Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman. Today, I am pleased to introduce my bill LD 2004, “An Act to Enhance Support of Local Nutrition Incentive Programs by Modifying the Eligibility Requirements of the Fund to Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives.”

As many of the Members on this committee know, the Fund to Address Food Insecurity and Provide Nutrition Incentives provides critical financial support to programs like Maine Harvest Bucks and Farm Fresh Rewards. These programs provide matching dollars to shoppers who use SNAP/EBT on local food.

The intent of the Fund is to support these programs. However, the language in the initial bill that established it is a bit inaccurate. By striking the term “federal” from the existing language in statute, we are ensuring that the statute is in line with the intent of the original bill.

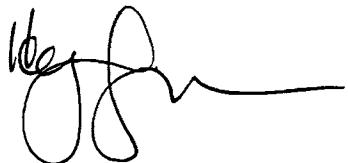
For those who might not be as familiar, SNAP/EBT dollars are not exclusively federally funded. State funds have been involved to expand eligibility for certain income groups, folks who struggle to feed their families and themselves. Even if we kept the word “federal” in the law, it is impractical – and virtually impossible – for program operators to know whether the funds on a SNAP/EBT card are federal or state.

No matter the funding sources, the original intent has always been to match SNAP/EBT dollars. In 2025, thanks to this Fund, farmers and food producers in Maine made more than \$2 million in additional sales. It supports 80 farmers markets, farmstands, CSAs, and small stores in all 16 counties – including over 400 small farms and small businesses.

This work allows farmers markets to plug into other food security programming like WIC, Maine Senior Farmshare, and SNAP Outreach. These investments make it possible for farmers

markets to continue to be huge resources for food access, as well as other services, for Mainers facing food insecurity.

I thank the Committee for its time, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Henry Ingwersen".

Henry Ingwersen

State Senator, Senate District 32

Arundel, Biddeford, Dayton, Hollis, and Lyman