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Members of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Conservation:

I understand that federal funding for the Maine Harvest Bucks program has been drastically cut for the second time in as many years. Please know that I plan to advocate at the federal level for funding to be restored; however, at this time in our Maine community, the program is needed more than ever.

My elderly mom receives SNAP benefits and thanks to the program, she has been able to get the freshest, healthiest produce available and support local farmers at the same time. I volunteer at the same market, and I have seen numerous young families with children take part as well. It is an amazing incentive as well as an opportunity right at the farm to hike, learn about the natural world, and experience the community working and thriving together.

Currently, our local farmer's market is being asked to raise a substantial portion of the funds to be distributed this year in order to keep the program alive. I urgently ask you to allot funding to sustain the program for at least the coming two years while we lobby for the federal funds to be restored.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Deb Myers, Somerville