

Support the Healthy Local Food Incentives Fund

Dear Governor Rauner,

As a resident of the state, I am writing to urge you to sign into law the "Healthy Local Food Incentives Fund," Illinois House Bill 6027. This bill would invest in the health of our state by expanding affordable access for Illinois' SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) population to the high quality fruits and vegetables sold at Illinois farmers markets. It would help many low-income Illinoisans living in rural and urban communities identified as 'food deserts' gain access to fresh and healthy foods. By providing for a \$1 million per year contribution of State funding for SNAP nutrition incentives, this bill would provide an annual investment in the health of Illinois' low-income population, small farm businesses and rural economies.



This bipartisan bill passed the House and Senate without opposition in the General Assembly, as Republicans and Democrats alike have recognized the multiple benefits of this investment. SNAP incentives at farmers markets have proved to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables among as many as 87% of SNAP market shoppers. A diet rich in vegetables and fruits can lower blood pressure, reduce risk of heart disease and stroke, and prevent some types of cancer. By investing in the increased health of our SNAP population, Illinois can reduce the rates of chronic disease and, consequently, save on Medicaid costs, especially as we assume a portion of the burden of Medicaid expansion in 2017 and beyond. Illinois' small farms and businesses selling at farmers markets and other direct-to-consumer venues will see increased revenues from both SNAP and incentives sales, resulting in higher profits and the ability to create more jobs as they invest in their businesses. Non-federal funding committed to SNAP 'nutrition incentive' programs will be eligible to be matched by federal Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives (FINI) funds, thereby potentially doubling the State's investment.

I urge you to sign HB 6027 and support this bipartisan effort to ensure the health and wellbeing of our state's low-income population, small farm businesses and rural economies.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Name: _____

Email*: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Cell Phone: _____

