



April 12, 2021

The Honorable Betsy Johnson  
The Honorable Elizabeth Steiner Hayward  
The Honorable Dan Rayfield  
Co-Chairs of the Joint Ways & Means Committee  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs,

### REQUEST: ROLL UP OF ONE TIME FUNDS IN HUNGER PROGRAMS FOR 2021-23

ACCESS is the Community Action Agency (CAA) for Jackson County and operates the Regional Food Bank as part of its mission to provide food, warmth, and shelter to the most vulnerable in our community. As a CAA, we have seen how lack of access to basic needs such as food can put a crippling strain on families and individuals, making it difficult for them to achieve self-sufficiency.

Therefore, we are asking to have **\$4.56 million be the new base budget for the Oregon Hunger Response Fund (OHRF) in the Oregon Department of Human Services budget** for the 2021-2023 biennium by rolling up the 2019-2021 one-time funds (see table, below). This funding will allow food banks across the state to help ensure that hunger and food insecurity do not stand in the way of citizens striving toward self-sufficiency.

Regional Food Banks are in a unique position to be able to utilize funding efficiently because of our connections to large-scale food resources and local partners. As a Regional Food Bank in Southern Oregon, OHRF funding has been critical in allowing ACCESS to provide enough food to low-income residents in our community not only during the COVID crisis, but also during the devastating 2020 wildfires.

Access to sufficient affordable housing, which had been an issue even prior to the wildfires, has only been exacerbated in the last year. As citizens struggle to find and maintain housing, food insecurity has become more of a specter for families and individuals who live on the margin. ACCESS' food bank serves one in five Jackson County residents, helping ensure that difficulty in obtaining nutritious food does not become a source of additional stress on families who are experiencing trauma or are in straitened circumstances.

COVID impacts, a constricted housing market, and the approaching wildfire season are just a few of the uncertainties that continue to mar the future for so many in our communities. OHRF funding aimed at addressing food insecurity has provided a source of stability for so many individuals and families in Jackson County in the past year and a half. I urge you to fund this critical resource at the \$4.56 million dollar level in the 2021-2023 ODHS budget by rolling up the 2019-2021 one-time funds.



Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Marcee Champion*

Marcee Champion  
Food Programs Director  
ACCESS

Cc

The Honorable Tina Kotek, Speaker of the House  
The Honorable Peter Courtney, Senate President  
The Honorable Jeff Golden  
The Honorable Art Robinson  
The Honorable Dennis Linthicum  
The Honorable Pam Marsh  
The Honorable Kim Wallen  
The Honorable Duane Stark  
The Honorable Vikki Breese-Iverson



TABLE: ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAMS REQUESTS FOR 2021-23 BUDGET

<u>ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAMS</u>	<u>STATE AGENCY</u>	<u>2021-23 BUDGET</u>	
		<u>Governor's Recommended</u>	<u>REQUESTED w/ one-time funding included</u>
OR Hunger Response Fund	<u>ODHS</u>	\$2.9 million	<u>\$4.56 million</u>