

Co-Chairs Senator Johnson, Senator Steiner Hayward, Representative Rayfield, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melissa Carlson-Swanson. I manage Tillamook County Food Bank, a board member of Food Roots, and resident of Tillamook. Food Security is essential for a vital community. Community Food Systems and Food Bank Organizations work together to ensure access to food for everyone in their community, sustainably, year round.

I am writing to ask that you please make **\$4.56 million the new base budget for the [Oregon Hunger Response Fund](#) in the Oregon Department of Human Services budget for the 2021-2023 biennium by rolling up the 2019-2021 one-time funds.**

Tillamook County Food Bank Branch of Oregon Food Bank serves over 30 programs and partner agencies, distributing much needed food assistance for seniors, families, children, and underserved communities. These funds help to ensure the sustainability of resilient food distribution programs, allowing for innovation in response to crisis, and increasing access to fresh and frozen foods, through investments in infrastructure to store and distribute perishable foods.

We are able to provide ongoing deliveries to all areas of the county to partner agencies and programs, to ensure food safety and provide capacity to agencies who otherwise would need to obtain a truck, and additional volunteer time and capacity to travel to and from the warehouse regularly. Also, existing infrastructure needs replacement with time, due to wear and tear, while additional infrastructure is needed to manage increases in the amount of perishable foods moving through our network. As the pandemic continues, along with the housing crisis and high cost of living, the need for these funds is even greater, providing the means to deliver consistent service and access, as well as rapid response to crisis and changing conditions.

I am also writing to ask that you please support **SB555**, which provides for the **expansion of Double Up Food Bucks Oregon**, a SNAP incentive program with a proven record of success. For every dollar spent on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm share programs, and grocery stores across the state, shoppers will receive a dollar to spend on Oregon-grown fruits and vegetables.

In Tillamook, shoppers are able to use these funds to purchase locally grown and produced foods year round, increasing their access to a variety of fresh foods, at Food Roots FarmTable StoreFront, at the Farmers market in the summer, with potential for additional sites, increasing access, if this expansion passes.

During the pandemic, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) has increased access to families through creative programming provided by community partners coming together to collaboratively ensure that food made its way to folks who were most impacted by the pandemic. This innovation will continue throughout the pandemic, and no doubt, beyond.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service.

Sincerely,

Melissa Carlson-Swanson

Branch Services Manager  
Oregon Food Bank Tillamook County Services  
Tillamook, OR