

Chair Gelser, Vice Chair Anderson, other members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery:

I am Howard Kenyon, hailing from the Portland end of the 14th District. Senator Lieber, I'm sorry we have yet to meet in person, this covid season being what it is. Senator Robinson, my son serves as parish priest in Central Point. Senator Gelser, my daughter is a campus pastor in Corvallis. Thank you all for representing my family.

I speak in support of HB 2833 and HB 2834.

As vice president of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, I represent the faith community on the Oregon Hunger Task Force. I am also honored to serve as chair of the Task Force.

The proposed changes in these bills were developed by our members, including myself, aiming to ensure the Task Force reflects those most impacted by hunger, and that it has the resources to deliver equitable outcomes for the state. As Task Force chair, I want you to know that we need to pass both the membership bill and the funding bill in order to more equitably and effectively address hunger in our state.

When we gather to review all aspects of food insecurity, we engage legislators, government agency leaders, nonprofit leaders, agricultural and business representatives, faith leaders, and members of the academic and research community. We also desire to more fully engage the voices of those who have experienced poverty and hunger, and other marginalizing forces, people from both urban and rural communities.

The heroic efforts of our state to meet this past year's hunger-inducing crises would have been severely hampered without the seasoned networking strength of the Task Force. Yet we can do better by engaging more "ears on the ground" and increasing the capacity and equitable impact of our work. The recent challenges have highlighted the value of making the most of modern communications and ensuring that all engaged parties from all corners of the state have a seat at our table in short notice.

Thank you for your consideration.