



Andrea Meyer, Director of Government Relations
Testimony in support of HB 2728
House Early Childhood & Human Services Committee
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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With over 500,000 members in Oregon, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families, with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment.

AARP Supports HB 2728. The Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's largest domestic nutrition assistance program for individuals and families who meet certain income and asset thresholds. In 2020, nearly 9.5 million Americans ages 50 and older (about 8%) were food insecure. In Oregon about 85,000 Oregonians 50+ (5.5%) were food insecure. Since then, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant increases in food insecurity for older adults, especially among Black, Hispanic and Latino older adults.

Older adults face ongoing challenges and life disruptions that may compromise their ability to afford food. For example, the death of a spouse or loved one can lead to a living situation that is unstable and socially isolated. Older adults who lose employment face longer durations of unemployment than younger workers. Food-insecurity can lead to older adults engaging in economic trade-offs, sacrificing their food budget to pay for other necessities, such as rent or other housing costs, transportation, or medical bills. The ripple effect is profound and older adults with food insecurity are more likely to have life changing health conditions. Access to SNAP has been linked to better health outcomes, reduced hospital and nursing home admissions.

Nutritious food should be accessible and affordable to all Oregonians but for SNAP recipients that is not always the reality. HB 2728 helps SNAP recipients access farmers' markets and with access to fresh and local produce we can continue to reduce diet-related chronic diseases and outcome disparities. We are pleased to add our voice to provide expanded access to SNAP and urge Committee to pass HB 2728.