

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Monroe & Benton County Oregon, I am urging the Oregon Legislature Joint Committee on Ways and Means to fully fund the construction of a new South Benton Food Pantry building. The South Benton Food Pantry offers critical high-need services and support to low-income residents in the area, providing basic staple food items as well as other forms of care and service that is simply not available anywhere else in the vicinity. One need only review the history or visit the Food Pantry to witness and verify the heavy use of, and critical needs provided by this non-profit organization to the South Benton community.

The existing building from which the South Benton Food Pantry operates is essentially a temporary outdoor shed. This building from which the services are being rendered is wholly inadequate and makes an already challenging critical community service just short of infeasible. During the winter months when the need is greatest, the building leaks water, suffers from drainage issues and is impossible to heat. Both the service providers and the community being served find themselves wet, shivering in brutal cold, and literally standing in mud and water. Considerable challenges are presented to store perishable food items and maintain a clean, safe and sanitary environment. Despite these adverse conditions the South Benton Food Pantry has remained open week after week, month after month, year after year, consistently providing basic nutrition & food staples to this rural low-income community.

A clean, safe, hygienic, temperature-controlled permanent structure is not just desired, but needed - and needed urgently.

It is difficult to imagine a more highly mandated use of Oregon Lottery funds - funds which are specifically designated for construction purposes - than for the construction of a building for the South Benton Food Pantry so it can continue to serve South Benton Oregon residents. I urge you to fully fund this construction project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Aryeh Frankfurter
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