



*Food Share of Lincoln County is an equal opportunity provider*

TO: Joint Subcommittee On Capital Construction

FROM: Nancy Mitchell, Executive Director, Food Share of Lincoln County

RE: HB 5030

DATE: May 5, 2023

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Mitchell, and I am the Executive Director of Food Share of Lincoln County.

This year marks my 26th year of advocating for food-insecure families and individuals in Lincoln County. The rising cost of food and housing has created significant hardships and worsened food insecurity in our communities. Food assistance programs are critical in supporting already stretched household budgets. Even a one-time trip to a food pantry can prevent a senior from going without heat, medication, or transportation. Our network of partner agencies serves over 1,600 households a month, many of whom are children, seniors and working families.

Our regional food bank network is requesting \$22M for one-time infrastructure investments into our regional food banks across the state. This request will help strengthen our statewide distribution network and support Oregonians facing hunger. Funds will allow us to meet the increased needs, while strengthening our statewide network to ensure food remains available to all who need it, for years to come.

Food Share of Lincoln County is in need of a new warehouse, because our current space does not have the capacity to meet the community's need. Our portion of these funds would allow us to start the process of acquiring buildable property, feasibility research, and architectural plans. We currently have to turn away food due to lack of space to properly distribute and store the loads. When complete, our warehouse will support the distribution of fresh, culturally appropriate food throughout Lincoln County.

We are mindful as we make this request that food banking alone is not a permanent solution to hunger. Hunger is not just an empty stomach or an individual experience. We are encouraged that the legislature is also taking action to address the reasons why so many people seek emergency food,

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. We urge you to support this important request.

Sincerely,

Nancy Mitchell

Executive Director