



Senate Committee on Human Services  
**Testimony in Support of SB 1585**  
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AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50+ to choose how they live as they age. AARP Oregon advocates on issues important to our more than 500,000 Oregon members with a focus on health security, financial resilience, and livable communities.

**AARP supports SB 1585 with the -2 Amendments.** 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.

That is why it is so important to develop solutions that help those who do not have the physical ability to shop for food or the place or ability to store food. For those vulnerable Oregonians who have limited or no capacity to buy, prepare and store food, a prepared hot meal, including a restaurant meal, needs to be an option. SB 1585 will allow Oregon to move forward with the option of participating in the restaurant meal program and looking for other options for a hot meal.

We appreciate that the task force will include those who have experienced food insecurity, those who have personal experience receiving SNAP benefits and personal or professional experience with those who experience barriers to accessing hot food, such as seniors, individuals with disabilities and homeless individuals.

We urge passage of SB 1585.