

# OREGON HUNGER TASK FORCE

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## Creating Policies for a Hunger-Free Oregon

To: Senate Committee On Human Services  
From: Chris Baker, Oregon Hunger Task Force  
RE: Testimony in support of HB 1585  
Date: February 7, 2024

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Chris Baker, and I am the Administrator of the [Oregon Hunger Task Force](#). The Oregon Hunger Task Force was created by the legislature in 1989 to act as a resource within government and as a statewide advocate for Oregonians who are food insecure. The focus of our work is centered on researching and analyzing the many intersecting issues that influence food insecurity. We listen to those who are most impacted and lift up their voices to service providers and decision makers to strengthen services and policies. And we make recommendations for policies that will have an impact on reducing hunger in the state of Oregon.

**This letter is written in support of HB 1585, Equal Access to Hot Meals.**

HB 1585 would establish a work group to examine the feasibility and potential implementation of a Restaurant Meals Program for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) users in the state of Oregon. The creation of such a program has the potential to significantly improve the well-being and food security of vulnerable individuals and families across our state, specifically seniors, community members experiencing homelessness, and college students.

Nine other states have implemented Restaurant Meals Programs allowing SNAP recipients to use their benefits at approved restaurants, providing them with an additional option for obtaining warm, nutritious meals, and offering flexibility and choice to those who may face challenges in preparing meals at home due to various circumstances.

By funding a work group to explore the viability of introducing a Restaurant Meals Program in Oregon, we have the opportunity to address the unique needs of SNAP users in our state and enhance the overall effectiveness of the SNAP program.

I urge you to consider the potential positive impact of this initiative on the lives of vulnerable individuals and families in Oregon. Your support for funding a work group will pave the way for informed decision-making and the development of a program that addresses the specific needs of our state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chris Baker  
Administrator, Oregon Hunger Task Force  
Legislative Strategist, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon