



Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and members of the Joint Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. For the record, my name is Josphine Sze, and I am the Executive Director of the Josephine County Food Bank.

Every Oregonian deserves to have access to a good, nutritious meal. But for too many in our state, food insecurity is an unfortunate reality. Over the past few years, the Legislature has made meaningful strides towards ensuring that no Oregonian goes hungry.

In the 2023 session, the Legislature recognized the need for investments into regional food bank capacity, designed to allow for the increased distribution of fresh and nutrient-dense meals for those in need. Josephine County was unfortunately left off of the list of Regional Food Banks to receive such funding at the conclusion of the 2023 session.

We are in need of \$863,000 to allow for the purchase of the land that our warehouse currently sits, and make needed improvements to the property. The City of Grants Pass, who owns the land, is supportive of the Food Bank making this purchase.

This investment would also allow for the Food Bank to build a community kitchen on-site, which will take in prepared food captured from the community and repackage it for distribution. This investment in land purchase and development will allow JCFB to distribute a higher capacity of food to those in Josephine County and all across Southern Oregon.

In the 2024 session, the Legislature has the opportunity to appropriate the necessary resources to allow for the Josephine County Food Bank to continue distributing food to communities in need in Southern Oregon.

**We urge you to include the \$863,000 appropriation in HB 5201.**

Thank you for your consideration.