



Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Wieland, and I'm with Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon. I respectfully submit this testimony in **support of House Bill 2958** to renew and strengthen Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The EITC is Oregon's largest anti-poverty tool in the tax code, supporting around 250,000 working families every year. By putting money back into the pockets of families earning low wages, the EITC helps cover essentials like rent, utilities, and most critically — food. For many families, this credit can make the difference between a stocked pantry and an empty one. Currently, Oregon's EITC is worth up to \$900, offering a vital lifeline to families facing food insecurity.

Without legislative action, Oregon's EITC will expire, leaving thousands of families more vulnerable to hunger and hardship. HB 2958 not only renews the credit but strengthens it in key ways. The bill doubles the state's match of the federal credit, helping families keep up with rising costs. It expands eligibility to include all childless workers, regardless of age, recognizing that food insecurity impacts people across all life stages. And it makes technical improvements to allow for regular advance payments, giving families access to resources when they need them most.

Strengthening the EITC would have far-reaching impacts:

- **Alleviate food insecurity:** More money in family budgets means more meals on the table, reducing reliance on emergency food resources.
- **Address geographic disparities:** Rural families are more likely to qualify for the EITC, and boosting the credit would help reduce food access inequities in rural communities.
- **Tackle racial and gender disparities:** The EITC is especially beneficial for women and people of color, groups disproportionately affected by food insecurity and economic instability.
- **Reduce poverty and its long-term costs:** Lifting families out of poverty through programs like the EITC leads to better health, educational outcomes, and less strain on state-funded support systems, including food assistance programs.

Oregon families shouldn't have to choose between paying bills and putting food on the table. Strengthening the EITC is a direct, effective way to fight food insecurity and support the well-being of families across our state.

I urge you to support Oregon's working families and pass HB 2958. Thank you.

David Wieland
Policy Advocate
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