

February 2, 2025

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Dobson and McIntire, and members of the Committee,

My name is Edward Buck-Shannon and I am a Quaker Voluntary Service Fellow and Policy and Advocacy Director at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO is a statewide association of faith partners with more than 750 member congregations. We operate 7 direct service programs and serve thousands of Oregonians a year.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon fully supports HB 3435. EMO operates the largest food pantry in the state, where we provide food to 1100 people on average every week. Through our host home program Second Home and SOAR, our Refugee Resettlement program we serve youth and kids who struggle with housing instability and for whom school meals are crucial.

As an association of faith groups, we feel a moral calling to support all of our youth, especially our most vulnerable. HB 3435 expands free breakfast and lunch to every public school student in Oregon, expands breakfast after the bell implementation, making breakfast accessible to all, and pays off student meal debt, among other crucial changes. We know from experience that many youth and kids struggle with food insecurity at home, for some school meals are the only meals that they can rely on.

Our Director of Public Policy Advocacy Britt Conroy is also a member of the Oregon Hunger Task Force which fully supports HB 3435. We urge you to stand up for Youth and commit to ending hunger in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Edward Buck-Shannon
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon