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**Date:** March 12, 2025  
**Name:** Carolyn Stein  
**Organization:** FOOD For Lane County  
**Location:** Eugene, Oregon

Co-Chair Campos, Co-Chair Valderamma, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of FOOD For Lane County, we strongly support increased funding through the Oregon Hunger Response Fund to provide critical food assistance throughout the state. In communities all across Lane County, we provide food assistance that serves as a lifeline to thousands of families and individuals facing food insecurity. As we have seen over the past few years, the need for food assistance has increased due to the rising costs of goods and services.

**One-third more Oregonians** are experiencing hunger now than before the pandemic. **Last year**, there were **2.5 million visits** to the 1,200 food assistance sites through the Oregon Food Network — a **31% increase** from the previous year. We are in the midst of an ongoing hunger crisis, and we can make meaningful change during this legislative session. In a survey among Oregon's **regional food programs**, a **gap of \$15 million** was identified to maintain existing services. In looking at it from a statewide perspective, the need intensifies. In our community, **we were serving 5,370** people monthly pre-pandemic. **Last month, we fed 6,884.**

Many of our neighbors are just one paycheck away from a crisis, and food banks are often the only place they can turn to for help. Food insecurity impacts Oregonians of all ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds, and it is a direct barrier to health, education, and productivity. The funding requested today will directly support food distribution, operational costs, and programs that target specific needs within our communities.

I urge you to recognize the vital work that food banks do and the critical role they play in sustaining the health and well-being of our communities. Increased funding is not just a response to a crisis; it is an investment in Oregon's future—a future where no one goes hungry. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

FOOD for Lane County is an equal opportunity provider and a member of



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