

Support for Critical Food Assistance

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Organization: Oregon Coast Community Action- South Coast Food Share (RFB) **Location:** Coos and Curry Counties, Oregon

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

On behalf of **Oregon Coast Community Action's Regional Food Bank, South Coast Food Share**, we urge you to support increased funding for regional food programs — programs that provide **lifesaving food assistance** to families and individuals across the state.

Hunger is not just a statistic — it's a **daily reality** for thousands of Oregonians. In our local communities, food banks serve as a **critical safety net**, ensuring that no one must choose between rent, medication, or feeding their family. However, as we have seen over the past few years, **the demand for food assistance continues to rise** — while the cost of food has surged, and federal support has declined.

The numbers are staggering:

- **One-third more Oregonians** are experiencing hunger now than before the pandemic.
- **2.5 million visits** were made to the **1,200 food assistance sites** in the Oregon Food Network last year — an **astonishing 31% increase** from the previous year.
- In our own community, we have seen a **64.57% increase** in households seeking food assistance, feeding an average of **11,195 people per month**, up from **10,696 pre-pandemic**.

Yet, despite this growing need, food banks are struggling to keep up. **A \$15 million funding gap** has been identified just to maintain current services across Oregon. In our region alone, South Coast Food Share needs at least **\$1.6 million** for the 2025–2027 biennium to sustain operations, stock pantry shelves, and continue serving our most vulnerable neighbors.

Food insecurity does not discriminate — it affects **children, seniors, working families, and individuals** across all communities. It is a direct barrier **to health, education, and economic stability**. Without adequate funding, many will go without the most basic necessity: **food**. This is not just a call for help; **it is a call to action**. Investing in food programs is not just a response to a crisis — it is an investment in **Oregon's future**. No one in our state should go hungry, and with your support, we can ensure that no one does.

We urge you to stand with us in this fight against hunger. **Your support today will make an immediate, tangible difference** in the lives of thousands of Oregonians.

Thank you for your time and commitment to building a stronger, hunger-free Oregon.

Sincerely,



Laura Hunter

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