



CCA Regional Food Bank
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Date: March 12, 2025
Name: Dusten Martin & Viviana Matthews
Organization: Clatsop Community Action Regional Food Bank
Location: Clatsop County, Oregon

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

On behalf of the CCA Regional Food Bank, the regional food bank serving Clatsop County, we strongly support the increased funding for regional food programs to provide critical food assistance throughout the state. In Clatsop County, we provide food security 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 only increased, along with the cost of purchasing food.

One-third more Oregonians are experiencing hunger now than before the pandemic. Last Fiscal Year 23/24, we had 27,809 visits to food pantry and produce pantry sites in Clatsop County. This was a 19% increase in households and 19% increase in individuals comprising those households over pre-pandemic levels. Over 92,000 meals were served at meal sites, a 16% increase, and nearly 13,000 backpacks filled with food for the weekend were sent home with school children, a 9% increase over pre-pandemic levels. We are in the midst of an ongoing hunger crisis, and we have the opportunity to address meaningful change in this legislative session. In a survey among Oregon's regional food programs, a gap of \$15 million was identified to maintain existing services. Without these funds, the end result is more people receiving less food.

To sustain food assistance operations and partnerships with local pantries, backpack programs, and meal sites, we need \$500,000 for the next biennium.

Many of our neighbors are only one paycheck away from having to make difficult decisions between rent, food, transportation and other needs. Food insecurity impacts all of them, regardless of age, 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 county.

I urge you to recognize the vital work that we do and the critical role we play in sustaining the health and well-being of our county. 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 thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dusten Martin', written over a white background.

Dusten Martin, Chief Operations Officer
CCA Regional Food Bank
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Viviana Matthews', written over a white background.

Viviana Matthews, Executive Director
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