



*Helping People. Changing Lives.*

**Date:** March 13, 2025

**Name:** Ryan McCambridge

**Organization:** Community Services Consortium; Linn Benton Food Share

**Location:** Serving Linn and Benton Counties

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

Community Services Consortium (CSC) and Linn Benton Food Share (LBFS) play a crucial role in addressing food insecurity in Oregon. Increased funding is essential to support the provision of critical food assistance across the state. In Linn and Benton counties, CSC and LBFS offer vital resources that help thousands of families and individuals who face food insecurity. This support spans all age groups, from infants to seniors, and is facilitated by a network of 68 local nonprofits. These nonprofits benefit from the central warehousing efficiencies provided by LBFS. However, the rising demand for food assistance and increasing costs make this work more challenging than ever before.

**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 Bank Network — a **31% increase** from the previous year. We are in the midst of an ongoing hunger crisis, and we have the opportunity to make 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. In the case of Linn Benton Food Share, we will spend \$1,000,000 of locally sourced funds for food acquisition alone in 2025. LBFS attempts to leverage as many dollars as possible with local farms and food vendors to help not just those in need, but our agricultural economy as well. Even with the robust local support LBFS enjoys, our ability to supply the essential food needed to our community will fall short. State funds have been crucial in the past in supporting our local efforts to help make our communities healthy and free from hunger.

In our community, the LBFS network provided 48,318 food boxes in calendar year 2024. An average of 15,522 individuals counted on emergency food resources each month for the past 12 months. LBFS relies on a volunteer-driven network of food pantries, meal sites, supplemental agencies and gleaning groups. Efficiencies enabled by the centralizing power of LBFS enable volunteers at these local agencies to do the work they do best: caring for their neighbors. The State of Oregon has been a crucial partner over the years in this effort of community building and ensuring food security. We hope this will continue.

Many of our neighbors are one paycheck away from financial crisis. Food banks are often the only place they can turn to for help. LBFS and our local partners are doing this work right now – today and every day – to ensure “everybody eats”. Our staff and volunteers are generous in giving of their time, compassion and heart. 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 address specific needs within our communities.

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Food banks play a vital role in sustaining the health and well-being of our communities. Recognizing their importance, as has been done in the past, highlights their critical work. Increased funding for food banks is not merely a response to a crisis; it is an investment in Oregon's future, ensuring that no one goes hungry. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ryan McCambridge

Director, Linn Benton Food Share