

# OREGON HUNGER TASK FORCE

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## Creating Policies for a Hunger-Free Oregon

March 13, 2025

To: Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and members of the Joint Subcommittee On Human Services  
From: Chris Baker, Oregon Hunger Task Force  
RE: Support for SB 5526

Co-Chairs Campos and Valderrama, and members of the committee, my name is Chris Baker and I am a Legislative Strategist at Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon and the Administrator of the [Oregon Hunger Task Force](#).

The Oregon Hunger Task Force was created by the legislature in 1989 to act as a resource within government and as a statewide advocate for Oregonians who are food insecure. The focus of our work is centered on researching and analyzing the many intersecting issues that influence food insecurity. Coordinating with service providers and decision makers to strengthen services and policies, and making recommendations for policies that will have an impact on reducing hunger in the state of Oregon.

I am writing to urge your full support for the critical food security programs within the Oregon Department of Human Services' Self-Sufficiency Programs listed in SB 5526.

Hunger is a reality for far too many of us. Currently, [1 in 8 Oregonians are food insecure, with 1 in 6 children experiencing hunger](#). Just nine years ago, I was able to retire my own SNAP EBT card. Programs like [Double Up Food Bucks](#) helped me stretch my SNAP benefits and gave me the opportunity to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for my children at local farmers markets.

The [SNAP Training & Employment Program \(STEP\)](#) supports SNAP participants wishing to obtain a degree or certificate and provides a variety of services designed to aid their educational and career success.

The [Elderly Simplified Application Process](#) ensures that older adults, like my own parents, who live on fixed incomes, can access SNAP benefits without unnecessary barriers. No senior should have to choose between food, medication, and housing. Streamlining this process means more older Oregonians can get the nutrition they need to age with dignity.

And lastly, the [Restaurant Meals Program](#) is a lifeline for individuals who cannot cook due to disability, age, or lack of housing. Implementing this program would ensure that some of our most vulnerable neighbors have reliable access to prepared meals.

As I wrap up, it's important to note that none of these programs work in isolation. The Oregon Hunger Task Force plays a vital role in coordinating across state agencies, the food bank network, non-profits, direct service providers, farmers, and communities to create a stronger, more efficient safety net. These programs and partnerships ensure that resources reach those who need them most and that we are maximizing every dollar invested in fighting hunger.

I appreciate your time today and urge you to fully fund the SSP portion of SB 5526... because food security is not just a human necessity—it is a foundation for health, stability, and a thriving Oregon. Thank you.

Chris Baker

**Oregon Hunger by County:**

District 6 - [Linn](#), [Marion](#), and [Lane](#)

District 8 - [Linn](#), [Marion](#), and [Benton](#)

District 17 - [Linn](#), [Marion](#)

District 18 - [Clackamas](#), [Marion](#)

District 23 - [Yamhill](#), [Polk](#)

District 36 - [Washington](#)

District 44 - [Multnomah](#)

District 47 - [Multnomah](#)