

Oregon Hunger Task Force

Creating Policies for a Hunger-Free Oregon

To: Members of the House Human Services and Housing Committee

From: Patti Whitney-Wise, Executive Director

Re: HB 2712

Position: Support

Date: February 27, 2013

Members

Donalda Dodson, Chair
Oregon Child Development Coalition

Liz Adams
OHSU - Child Development & Rehabilitation Center

Representative Cliff Bentz

Belit Burke
DHS - Children, Adults & Families

Tom Clancey-Burns
Community Action Partnership of Oregon

Senator Jackie Dingfelder
At large member

Joyce Dougherty
ODE - Child Nutrition Programs

Jonathan Enz, Pastor
Heppner United Methodist Church

Kevin Finney
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Norene Goplen
Oregon Faith Roundtable Against Hunger

Anne Hoisington
OSU - Extension Service

Phillip Kennedy-Wong
Oregon Food Bank - Advocacy

Richard Mathews
Housing and Community Services

Megan Osborne
Student Representative

Steve Randolph
Oregon Food Bank

Senator Diane Rosenbaum

Cliff Trow
Private Citizen

Sue Woodbury
DHS - Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

The Oregon Hunger Task Force urges you to support HB 2712. This bill will move the state closer to restoring a much-needed safety net for adults in Oregon as they apply for federal disability benefits.

Oregonians with disabilities should have nutritious meals, safe housing, and adequate medical care, yet all too often, they struggle just to survive. It often takes between 1 and 3 years to receive federal disability benefits. In the meantime, their health conditions worsen and they often fall into poverty.

In the past, the General Assistance program provided a bridge loan program for adults who were waiting for federal assistance. This program provided minimal support to help with housing and other needs. It also provided assistance with the federal application process.

Finding a way to reinstate an assistance program makes sense. Oregonians with disabilities are able to stabilize and get help applying for federal benefits. This helps them and the communities in which they live. Oregon gets reimbursed for its costs. When Oregonians with disabilities are approved for federal SSI/SSDI benefits, they are retroactive to the date of application and the state gets reimbursed for the cash assistance provided during that waiting time.

Creating a workgroup to recommend the best way to provide assistance is a wise investment and a good deal. Individuals with disabilities who fall into poverty or homelessness often end up in emergency rooms, jails, or shelters, and the cost of rehabilitation can be much higher. The Oregon Hunger Task Force urges you to vote yes on HB 2712.

Patti Whitney-Wise
Executive Director
712 SE Hawthorne, #202
Portland, OR 97214
Tel: (503) 595-5501x302
Fax: (503) 595-5504
patti@oregonhunger.org
www.oregonhunger.org