

Oregon Hunger Task Force

Creating Policies for a Hunger-Free Oregon

MEASURE: SB 456
EXHIBIT: 11
S. HEALTHCARE & HUMAN SERVICES
DATE: 3/11/13 PAGES: 2
SUBMITTED BY: Robyn Johnson

To: Senate Committee on Health Care and Human Services

From: Robyn Johnson, Public Policy Manager

Re: SB 456 – Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Programs

Date: March 11, 2013 Position: Support

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

Gene 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)

Patti Whitney-Wise
Executive Director
1500 SE Hawthorne, #202
Portland, OR 97214
Tel: (503) 595-5501x302
Fax: (503) 595-5504
patti@oregonhunger.org
www.oregonhunger.org

The Oregon Hunger Task Force supports SB 456 to increase funds for the Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program. This bill will provide more Oregon grown fruits, vegetable, and herbs to Oregon seniors with very low incomes, as well as support Oregon's small and medium farms.

Hunger continues to be a serious problem in our state, particularly among our seniors. The most recent data available on food security among seniors from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) estimates that about 7% of Oregon seniors live in food insecure situations, and 11% live at or below the poverty level.

The Oregon Hunger Task Force views hunger as an income issue. For the seniors who are living in poverty and struggling to pay their living expenses and potentially increasing medical expenses, resources for food, particularly for nutritious foods become scarce. The number of seniors accessing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) is still too few, but the number is growing. SNAP allows seniors to purchase more of the foods they need to support a healthy diet. However, we know that for people with low-incomes, their SNAP benefit is often their entire food budget.

The Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program is a great way that we can support seniors to purchase fruits and vegetables to support their particularly dietary needs.

SB 456 strongly supports goal two of our state's five year plan to end hunger; Ending Hunger Before It Begins: *Oregon's Call to Action*, which calls to cultivating a strong regional food system in Oregon that will improve access to healthy foods among food-insecure households.

This is an opportune time to invest in the health of seniors with low-incomes by providing them with fresh food, while supporting and increasing the market share for Oregon farmers. HB 2649 is an investment in health of our seniors and our state's economy, and will help address senior hunger.

Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program



Supporting
*good nutrition and
health*

for our seniors,
and *financial
health* for our
farmers.

The Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program encourages the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables and promotes them as a part of the daily diet of low-income seniors in Oregon. It also increases sales of Oregon grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs at farmers markets.

SB 456

- Adds \$400,000 to the Senior Farm Direct Nutrition Program.
- Will allow an additional 6,000 seniors per year to purchase Oregon fruits and vegetables across the state.
- Expands the use of farmers markets and farm stands.

Farm Direct Helps Oregon

- In 2012, the program, in every county in Oregon, served over 31,000 seniors.
- Supports local agriculture by providing additional customers for over 700 farmers across the state.
- State and federal contributions paid nearly \$1 million to Oregon farmers through the Senior Farm Direct Program.

For more information:
Robyn Johnson, Public Policy Manager
503-740-0516, robyn@oregonhunger.org

Oregon Hunger Task Force

Creating Policies for a Hunger-Free Oregon