



February 11, 2014

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
c/o Senator Ginny Burdick, Chair
900 Court St. NE, S-213
Salem, OR 97301

Committee Members:

The Elders in Action (EiA) Commission is a citizen advocacy council that advises the City of Portland, Multnomah County and the Department of Aging and Disabilities on senior issues and services in Oregon. As such, we support affordable, high quality health services for older adults and adults with disabilities. The EiA Commission supports passage of SB 1541 and we ask for swift action to move this bill forward in this legislative session.

Food insecurity in Oregon is deepening with forthcoming cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) resulting from the federal Farm Bill that was recently signed into law. These cuts are in addition to the decrease in benefits that were implemented in November, 2013. According to the Oregon Department of Human Services, approximately 80,000 Oregon households will face a net decrease in benefits, on average, of \$58.00 per month. Additionally, sequestration cuts have impacted services for a substantial number of vulnerable persons of all ages statewide.

SB 1541 provides a critical incentive to food producers whose generosity is essential in the current economy and would mitigate, to some degree, the recent SNAP cuts. The proposed bill would extend a pre-existing food donation tax credit that lapsed in 2011 and increase the credit from 10% to 15%. The proposed credit increase will result in larger donations by farmers, increasing healthy food supply for our lower income residents. It is expected that for less than \$500,000 in tax credits we can provide approximately 2 million meals for the hungry.

We strongly urge you to pass SB 1541.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Gentile". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bill Gentile
Chair, Elders in Action Commission