



“Making Every Resource Count”

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**Testimony before the Senate Human Services & Early Childhood
Submitted by Amanda Dalton on behalf of the Oregon Wheat Growers League
March 3, 2015**

RE: Oppose SB 62

Chair Gelser & Members of the Committee:

As the oldest not-for-profit grower trade association in the U.S. wheat industry, the Oregon Wheat Growers League advocates on behalf of the 1400 wheat and barley producers across Oregon. Oregon currently ranks 12th amongst the wheat producing states in the U.S. and wheat is grown in 24 of the 36 counties in Oregon. We are here today opposing SB 62.

As drafted, this bill will exempt the local mills that are accepting donated wheat, processing it and donating the resulting pancake mix. In 1997 the Oregon Wheat Foundation launched the *Bushels for Betsy* project, a program that allows wheat producers to join the fight against hunger in Oregon.

Because of generous wheat donations from growers we were able to deliver 200,000 lbs. of pancake mix to Oregon food Bank in January 2014. This donation marks the fifth delivery of pancake mix since our two organizations joined forces in 2008. To date we have delivered 715,000 lbs. of pancake mix that has helped to feed hungry Oregonians.

Our growers donate a portion of their harvest. Each donation is then combined with others and we are able to make a huge difference right here in Oregon. The wheat is milled by Pendleton Flour Mills, blended and bagged by Continental Mills and distributed by Oregon Food Bank through the Oregon Food Bank Network.

Processors are our partners in this effort. They connect the dots between the grower and the hungry. Many ag products, like wheat, aren't very useful without processing. Most people can't use a truckload of wheat, that's why we need processors to make it into flour and package it for individual use. Processing is also a key to making products available throughout the year, especially throughout the winter.

The need in Oregon has not subsided. Last year over 1.1 million food boxes were distributed in Oregon. Over 260,000 people eat from a food box each month and 35% of these are children. Now is not the time to back off or lessen our efforts.

The crop tax donation is a key partner in this donation effort. While we understand the need to reevaluate and remove certain tax credits, we do not believe this is the right area to target. The crop tax credit helps encourage farmer donations and covers the growing costs of planting, harvesting and processing.

We urge your opposition to SB 62 and thank you for your continued support of Oregon farmers and ranchers who are joining alongside you to feed Oregon's hungry.