



Partners for a
Hunger-Free Oregon

Ending hunger before it begins.

To: House Committee on Human Services and Housing
From: Matt Newell-Ching, Public Affairs Director
Subject: The Housing Crisis is Driving up Hunger in Oregon - Support HB 2004
Date: March 2, 2017

We envision an Oregon that is hunger-free, healthy and thriving.

Yet hunger is increasing in Oregon. The 2016 USDA report on food insecurity showed that Oregon is the only state with a statistically-significant increase in hunger, even as hunger in the rest of America is decreasing. Why?

A major reason is because housing is increasingly unaffordable. When a family's rent increases but wages don't keep pace, there is simply less money in the household budget for food and other basic needs.

One in three renters in Oregon now experiences food insecurity, meaning that families don't always know where their next meal will come from. Food insecurity among renters in Oregon has increased by six percentage points over the last few years (2013-'15 compared to 2010-'12) as rental prices have increased in every corner of the state.

Nationwide, renters are three times more likely to experience hunger than homeowners. In Oregon, it's even worse. **Renters in Oregon are six times more likely to experience hunger than those who own a home¹**. This disproportionately impacts people of color who – for generations in Oregon – were systematically denied the right to home ownership because of discriminatory housing policies.

We recognize that there is no silver bullet when it comes to solving Oregon's housing crisis. **Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon urges passage of HB 2004** because we believe creating a just cause eviction standard and lifting the preemption on cities to enact rent stabilization policies are important tools in the toolbox. Renters in Oregon are just 30 days away from losing their homes for no reason. This impacts everyone: our children, workers, and communities.

Together, we can build an Oregon where everyone has a safe, affordable, and stable place to call home.

¹ Food Insecurity in Oregon: Considering the Role of Housing; Edwards, October 2016.