



To: House Committee on Education  
From: Matt Newell-Ching, Public Affairs Director  
Subject: Statement of support for addressing college student hunger (HB 3038)  
Date: April 3, 2019

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

College Students experience hunger and food insecurity at alarming rates. Hunger and food insecurity on campus hinders academic achievement, worsens health outcomes, and threatens economic mobility.

According to the Oregon Hunger Task Force, "Three in four undergraduates defy traditional stereotypes. Just 13% live on college campuses, and nearly half attend community colleges. One in four students is a parent, juggling childcare responsibilities with class assignments. About 75% work for pay while in school, including a significant number of full-time workers."

Yet many college students are denied access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because of federal rules rooted in outdated assumptions about college students. HB 3038 is a good start to addressing hunger in Oregon's colleges.

#### Oregon Can Address College Student Hunger (HB 3038)

The bill has two main parts:

1. Establishes a pilot program to connect more students to work study jobs and food assistance. Federal SNAP rules allow college students *participating* in Work Study jobs to receive food assistance through SNAP. Many students *qualify* for work study jobs, however, but if a slot is not available, SNAP is not available to these students unless they work 20 hours or more per week at an outside job - regardless of a student's need. The pilot program aims to establish more work study jobs at two campuses in Oregon with an aim to connect more students to food assistance that will support students completing their degrees.
2. Conducts a study on hunger at colleges in Oregon and makes recommendations. Emerging research shows that food insecurity on college campuses is high. Nationwide, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab reports that up to two-thirds of community colleges experience food insecurity. This is not surprising since one of the primary aims of attending college is to earn more. The report will draw on the expertise of students with lived experience of food insecurity, research the scope of food security in Oregon, and make recommendations to the legislature about how to build Hunger-Free college campuses that give students conditions for success.

Supporting college students with food assistance is a smart idea for Oregon. It will support students earning degrees, reduce income inequality, and it's the right thing to do. In that spirit, Hunger-Free Oregon supports HB 3038 and looks forward to being a part of its scope of work.