

TO: Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
FROM: Katy Giombolini, Food Systems Manager, Oregon Food Bank
RE: Support for HB 2785 to support food security and regional economies
DATE: February 4, 2021



Chair Witt and members of the committee,

Oregon Food Bank's mission is to eliminate hunger and its root causes. Prior to the pandemic, 1 in 11 Oregonians were food insecure. **Today, nearly 1 in 5 people in our communities face hunger – a dramatic increase.** And the public health and economic impacts of the pandemic have fallen hardest on people who have faced systemic inequities for generations.

HB 2785 provides an opportunity to begin addressing these growing needs facing our communities due to this pandemic. Building on the last summer's passing of HB 4206, we believe it is critical to offer a grant program to support meat processing facilities to expand processing capacity.

Oregon Food Bank supports HB 2785 for the following reasons:

- We believe this bill will increase regional food system resilience and rural economic development. Improved local economies will mean fewer people visiting our 1,400 pantries and programs around the state.
- Increased capacity of processing facilities open up more opportunities for donating cattle, sheep, hogs and animals to the 20 regional food banks that make up the Oregon Food Bank network in the State of Oregon.
- Provide more local processing for the 36 county fairs that want to have their animals from 4H and FFA processed for local pantries to help their communities.

We have the opportunity to rebuild and emerge stronger so that we can end hunger for good in our communities. Supporting HB 2785 contributes to that shared vision of thriving, resilient communities. **Please join us in supporting HB 2785.**