

My name is Amy Powers and I am writing on behalf of Washington County Services, Oregon Food Bank. Throughout my life I have experienced food insecurity and am passionate about solving hunger and the root causes of hunger. Which is why I am writing to you today.

The Oregon Hunger Response Fund provides our network with critical state funding to leverage resources, food, and more cost-effective operations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a dramatic increase of 122% in families served in our food-assistance network in the metro area. With the combination of high cost of living and housing, this impacts a dramatic increase of food insecurity for our neighbors. With the uncertainties of the ongoing pandemic response, unemployment, the approaching wildfire season, there is so much work to be done. Washington County Services, Oregon Food Bank, is ready to respond to these uncertain times and we need the certainty of the one-time funds to be a part of the base budgets of the Oregon Hunger Response Fund.

The Oregon Food Bank Network has responded to the increased need during the Covid-19 pandemic throughout the state. One of the reasons that we were able to respond so well was because of Oregon Hunger Response Funds and additional food purchasing provided by the Oregon Legislature. Hunger is an entrenched problem in Oregon and the pandemic is bringing this to light. Oregon Food Bank Network respectfully requests \$4.56 million as the new base budget for the Oregon Hunger Response Fund in the DHS budget - the same level of funding as the 2019-2021 biennium by calculating one-time funds as part of the base budget for the 2021-2023 biennium.

Thank you for your continued support,
Amy

Amy Powers
Metro & Washington County Services Manager
Oregon Food Bank