



**To:** Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
**From:** Oregon Food Bank  
**RE:** Support for Oregon Food Bank's Funding Request  
**Date:** February 11, 2022

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Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Subcommittee,

For the record, my name is Kim Olson and I am the Community Philanthropy Manager for Campaigns & Network at Oregon Food Bank. Oregon Food Bank's mission is to end hunger and its root causes.

During the pandemic, wildfires, and winter storms, food banks and pantries across the state have been a critical resource to Oregonians facing food insecurity. An estimated 1.7 million people (our friends, family, neighbors, and colleagues) sought emergency food assistance through the Oregon Food Bank Network in 2020 — roughly double the number we see in an average year — with over a million people accessing resources in 2021. We've risen to this challenge through strong private and public partnership - community members and elected champions have rallied with insight and energized support, demonstrating what it means to care for one another through the greatest hardships.

At Oregon Food Bank, we believe that everyone should have access to quality and fresh food. And we continue to respond to public health and economic impacts of COVID-19 that have fallen hardest on people who have faced systemic inequities for generations (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; immigrants and refugees; transgender and gender nonconforming folks; and single mothers and caregivers).

In doing so, we have pushed our aging facilities to their limits. This short session, the Oregon Food Bank has a request that can help ensure Oregonians across the State continue to have consistent access to healthy sources of food - specifically through infrastructure investments needed to Oregon Food Bank's statewide warehouse. The statewide warehouse is the operational hub for food distribution to the entire region. Distributions out of the warehouse are made to the 20 regional food banks across the state and then to 1,400 partner agencies (including meal sites, food pantries, schools, and beyond.).

**Oregon Food Bank is requesting \$5 million in Lottery Bonds for these needed infrastructure improvements.** These funds would specifically be used for enhanced capacity for refrigerated storage and distribution of fresh food, modernizing mechanical systems, and transitioning to electric food distribution vans. Such investments would also improve Oregon Food Bank's ability to receive and distribute fresh, nutrient-dense food - produce, meats, and dairy - produced and harvested locally in key regions of the state. Investments would enhance our ability to distribute these resources to the statewide network of regional food banks and then on to communities impacted most, and disproportionately, by food insecurity and hunger.

Oregon Food Bank strongly encourages your support of this request.

Sincerely,

*K Olson*

Kim Olson

Community Philanthropy Manager: Campaigns & Network - Oregon Food Bank