



Josephine County Food Bank

3658 Upper River Road
PO Box 250
Grants Pass, Oregon 97528
Phone: (541) 479-5556
Fax: (541) 476-6268

TO: Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction
FROM: Josephine Sze, Executive Director, Josephine County Food Bank
RE: HB 5030
DATE: May 5, 2023

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

My name is Josephine Sze, Executive Director of Josephine County Food Bank. Every month, we provide meals to over 15,000 people through our network of partner agencies. Shockingly, over a quarter of those we serve are children. In addition to collecting, storing and distributing food, our unique location allows us to efficiently incorporate fresh farm grown foods as a part of our program.

Our regional food bank network is requesting \$22M for one-time infrastructure investments into our regional food banks across the state. This request will help strengthen our statewide distribution network and support Oregonians facing hunger. Funds will allow us to meet the increased needs, while strengthening our statewide network to ensure food remains available to all who need it, for years to come.

Josephine County Food Bank would use its portion of these funds to help in the expansion of a mobile pantry to reach communities who experience barriers accessing traditional food distributional models. This mobile pantry will have the capacity to reach eight new sites, focusing on rural schools and senior access points in Williams, Merlin, Selma, Cave Junction, Takilma, and O'Brien, which remain some of the most remote areas of Josephine County. Additional funds will be used to purchase the land Josephine County Food Bank currently leases from the city for our warehouse.

We are mindful as we make this request that food banking alone is not a permanent solution to hunger. Hunger is not just an empty stomach or an individual experience. We are encouraged that the legislature is also taking action to address the reasons why so many people seek emergency food.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration. We urge you to support this important request.

Sincerely,

Josephine Sze
Executive Director

“Because no one should be hungry!”