



MARION POLK
FOOD SHARE

TO: Joint Subcommittee On Capital Construction
FROM: Rick Gaupo, President & CEO, Marion Polk Food Share
RE: HB 5030
DATE: May 5, 2023

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

My name is Rick Gaupo, President & CEO of Marion Polk Food Share. Each month our organization serves more than 45,000 individuals, including 15,000 children, in Marion and Polk counties. Last year, the Marion Polk Food Share network provided nearly 10 million pounds of nutritious food to people in need across the mid-Willamette Valley.

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.

Marion Polk Food Share would use its portion of these funds to expand programming support in response to a significant increase in demand for emergency food services. These funds will be used for community outreach, including mobile pantries and farmworker support. These are critical programs for meeting the community where they are and relieving their immediate food assistance needs. Additional funds will be used for planning, design and initial land acquisition costs for a new commercial kitchen for our Meals on Wheels program, which serves more than 800 seniors every day.

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,

Rick Gaupo
President & CEO