



Disability Rights Oregon

TO: Senate Human Services Committee
FROM: Disability Rights Oregon
DATE: February 05, 2024
RE: SB 1585 – Support

Chair Gelser-Blouin, Vice-Chair Robinson and Members of the Committee,

My name is ben Gurewitz, I am a Public Policy Advocate for Disability Rights Oregon, and we are excited to be offering this testimony in Support of SB 1585 and to support the expansion of SNAP benefits to include hot foods for vulnerable Oregonians.

SB 1585 will bring much needed relief to many Oregonians with disabilities. A 2021 study published by the United States Department of Agriculture found that 24 percent of households with an adult who had a disability were food insecure compared to 7 percent of the general population. As such, Individuals with disabilities are overrepresented in population of consumers of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Ensuring that hot meals are available will dramatically improve the lives of Oregonians, especially for people with disabilities. Many individuals are not able to cook for themselves due to physical limitations, having hot meals available will eliminate a lot of concern and worry about how people can access food as a part of their daily routine. In addition, disabled consumers of SNAP will not need to rely on caregivers to cook for them in the same way. This will also allow individuals to receive culturally competent food when they or their caregiver cannot cook food consistent with their cultural tradition.

DRO urges this committee to support Senate Bill 1585. This step aligns with our state's commitment to the economic and physical well-being of all Oregon residents. By addressing the immediate food needs of vulnerable populations, we contribute to more compassionate and resilient communities across Oregon.

About Disability Rights Oregon

Since 1977 Disability Rights Oregon has been the State's Protection and Advocacy System.¹ We are authorized by Congress to protect, advocate, and enforce the rights of people with disabilities under the U.S. Constitution and Federal and State laws, investigate abuse and

¹ See ORS 192.517.

neglect of people with disabilities, and “pursue administrative, legal, and other appropriate remedies”.² We are also mandated to "educate policymakers" on matters related to people with disabilities.³

If you have any questions regarding DRO’s position on this legislation, please call Ben Gurewitz at 971-806-7908 or email him at bgurewitz@droregon.org.

² See 42 U.S.C. § 15041 et seq; 42 U.S.C. § 10801 et seq.

³ See 42 U.S. Code § 15043(a)(2)(L).