

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

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When I entered the adult world I had undiagnosed mental health problems that left me floundering in my early 20s. For long periods of time I was unable to hold and job, if it hadn't been for food stamps at that time I don't know how I would have eaten on a regular basis. As my mental health started to improve and I got a job in my mid twenties it truly felt like I was being punished for earning more money every time my food stamps would get cut back. At a certain point I was hardly making over minimum wage and yet it was "too much" for me to qualify for anything except the lowest allowance of \$19 a month. It's honestly more of a slap in the face to offer someone \$20 and expect it to help with their meals in any significant way - and that was 5 or 6 years ago before inflation had sky-rocketed. At this point I am no longer able to collect any food stamps. I work as a caregiver for adults with disabilities and my paycheck gives me just enough to cover my monthly bills and, what I thought, was enough food. I've recently found at a doctor's appointment that I've been losing a significant amount of weight and my counselor (who is a nutrition and eating disorder specialist, though that's not why I'm seeing her) recently told me that I was not, in fact, eating anywhere near enough food. I literally can't afford to purchase any more though so I'm going to have to start going to food box pick-ups and other similar services. Tomorrow will be my first time going. If I, someone who works a well-respected job like caregiving, doesn't have enough money to adequately feed & nourish my body, this state has a problem. Truthfully we all deserve to have food on the table & Oregon would be far more productive for it.