



TO: House Committee on Emergency Management and Veterans
FROM: Rogue Food Unites
SUBJECT: **House Bill 4044, House Bill 4121**

Dear Chair Tran, Vice Chairs Lewis and Watanabe, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Rogue Food Unites, an emergency feeding organization, I am writing to encourage you to **Vote Yes on House Bill 4044, House Bill 4121**.

Since its inception in 2020, the Office of Resilience and Emergency Management (OREM) has had a demonstrable impact on communities' resilience throughout disaster response and recovery. Each year, OREM's work proves instrumental in the success of disaster responses statewide and continues to become increasingly important as extreme weather events become more commonplace.

In 2020, Southern Oregon experienced firsthand the importance of disaster preparedness when the most destructive wildfires in Oregon's history struck our region. Like OREM, Rogue Food Unites (RFU) was founded in response to these devastating events, and, in partnership with OREM, we provided essential support to those affected in Deschutes, Douglas, Klamath, Josephine, and Jackson Counties.

In January 2024, RFU signed a contract with OREM to become a statewide emergency feeding partner during state-declared disasters. Fifteen days later, ice storms along the I-5 corridor left many people in counties across the state in need of assistance. With OREM's support, RFU distributed 1,000 provision boxes and contracted with local restaurants to provide 3,740 hot meals to disaster-affected individuals, recirculating \$74,000 through the affected communities.

Resilience Hubs and Networks have proved to be critical infrastructure for ensuring food access throughout emergencies and periods of instability. Establishing sustained funding for OREM's Resilience Hubs and Networks Program ensures communities will be able to respond quickly and effectively to disruptions to food access.

Funding disaster preparedness is essential to preventing extreme weather events from escalating into large-scale disasters. By strategically investing in locally-driven disaster preparedness initiatives, we can build more resilient communities and save lives when natural disasters strike.

Respectfully,
Amber Ferguson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amber Ferguson".

Executive Director
Rogue Food Unites ®