



**OREGON FOOD BANK  
OREGON HUNGER RELIEF TASK FORCE**

# Advocacy Alert

**October 2007  
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take five

**Action:**

Vote yes on Measure 50 when you get your Oregon ballot in the mail this month.

Some folks around the state will begin receiving their ballots as soon as October 19. And please be sure to mail those yes on 50 votes in early so your ballot reaches the elections office in time to be counted on November 6.

If you're not already registered to vote, you've got until October 16 to be eligible to vote for Measure 50. To register, file a voter registration form with your county elections office by the October 16 deadline.

For more information, please visit <http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/voterresources.html>

## Yes on Measure 50 – hunger and health are related

Election Day is only weeks away. On November 6, voters will decide whether to provide more than 100,000 children with health coverage through an increase in the state's tobacco tax.

Oregon Food Bank supports Measure 50, the Healthy Kids Plan, because its passage would mean that many, many Oregon families would no longer have to make the tough choice between seeking medical care or putting food on the table.

**Hunger and health are related**

According to the Oregon Food Bank Network's

hunger factors assessment survey, more than half the households receiving emergency food boxes avoided or delayed medical care due to cost.

Thousands of working Oregonians seek emergency food each month because they simply don't earn enough to make ends meet. For families without medical insurance, health care is among the very highest of household costs and a major reason they seek emergency food. Every day, the Oregon Food Bank Network provides food to people who are hungry across our state, many of whom also lack health coverage.

**Hard-working families should not have to choose between food and health care**

An emergency food box recipient in Eugene told us, "I feel as though I have to live with substandard health because I can't afford to take care of myself even when I am working. Most of my debt is related to education and health."

This year, the Oregon Food Bank Network will distribute more than 650,000 emergency food boxes to households throughout the state. Most of these households are families with children.

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**Legislative  
Yellow Pages**

**State Legislative Information**  
1-800-332-2313 (outside Salem)  
(503) 986-1000 (in Salem)  
[www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide](http://www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide)

**Members of Congress**

- Senator Smith  
(503) 326-3386
- Senator Wyden  
(503) 326-7525
- Rep. Wu (District 1)  
(503) 326-2901
- Rep. Walden (District 2)  
(541) 776-4646
- Rep. Blumenauer (District 3)  
(503) 231-2300
- Rep. DeFazio (District 4)  
(541) 465-6732
- Rep. Hooley (District 5)  
(503) 588-9100

Governor Kulongoski will proclaim October 12 to 19 as Oregon Harvest Week to raise awareness of hunger issues. The governor has been a champion of anti-hunger efforts throughout his tenure.

In fact, there is a high need for anti-hunger efforts right now. The Oregon Food Bank Network needs your help.

"Oregon Food Bank's warehouse shelves are as empty as I've ever seen them," said Rachel Bristol, OFB's CEO. "We're currently distributing less than half of the food that we

would normally ship to regional food banks each week."

On average, OFB normally has 300,000 pounds of new donations to offer the OFB Network weekly and delivers about 700,000 pounds of food each week from its warehouse to its network of regional food banks and local helping agencies throughout Oregon and Clark County, Wash. But in the last few weeks, weekly offerings have dropped by 25-75% and statewide deliveries are down 200,000 pounds per week.

"The entire statewide Oregon Food Bank Network of regional food banks and the 900 local agencies we serve throughout Oregon and southwest Washington are feeling the impact," Bristol said. Please donate on line at [www.oregonfoodbank.org](http://www.oregonfoodbank.org). Oregon Food Bank will use funds to help acquire, store and move food.

Organize your own food drive. We can help. Please call Maryann Brunner, (503) 282-0555, Ext. 226. Drop off donations at OFB facilities or call us for the location of an OFB Network agency near you.

## Governor to proclaim Harvest Week



# Happy Birthday Food Stamp Program!

*Celebrating 30 years of success*

September 2007 marks the 30-year anniversary of the Food Stamp Program, the largest and most comprehensive nutrition program in America. Hunger received national attention after CBS aired a documentary in 1968 called *Hunger in America*, which showed U.S. children dying of severe malnutrition many years after the depression. It shocked the nation into expanding food stamps as part of the War on Poverty. (See the short video *Making America Stronger* at [www.oregonhunger.org](http://www.oregonhunger.org).)

Senators Bob Dole and George McGovern passed legislation to create the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to address widespread hunger and malnutrition. Prior to this legislation there was a food stamp program but participants had to pay for a portion of their stamps and the program was not widely utilized. The 1977 landmark

legislation expanded participation and eliminated the requirement of paying for stamps. The Food Stamp Program has been tremendously successful in reducing childhood hunger and malnutrition over the past 30 years. Currently, more than 26 million Americans, including more than 430,000 Oregonians, receive food stamps each month. Over 80% of benefits go to households with children. Paper stamps have been replaced by Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards which are very efficient and have contributed to the highest accuracy rate in the history of the program.

Oregon has been very successful in reducing hunger by increasing food stamp participation. In 2000 Oregon ranked number one in the nation for its high percentage of hungry people. The number of eligible people who were actually getting food stamps was very low. After an extensive outreach campaign,

food stamp participation is now at 80% and Oregon is down to the middle of the pack in the national hunger ranking. More than \$460 million federal dollars flow into Oregon communities each year, supporting households, local retailers and local economies

Food stamps have a positive rippling effect in society and are as essential today as they were when the program began. Families, seniors, disabled people and hard-working Oregonians are able to get the support they need to stay in school, keep their jobs - or simply survive.

For information about eligibility, Oregonians can visit a self-screening tool at [www.oregonhelps.org](http://www.oregonhelps.org) or call the Oregon SafeNet information hotline at 1-800-SAFENET (723-3638).

The 30-year anniversary coincides with the reauthorization of the Food Stamp Program in the 2007 farm bill. The farm bill passed the House and is now in the Senate. For more information on how you can advocate for a stronger program, visit [www.oregonhunger.org](http://www.oregonhunger.org) or [www.oregonfoodbank.org](http://www.oregonfoodbank.org).

**Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force Celebration!**  
*During the Governor's Harvest Week*  
 You are invited to celebrate  
 18 years of working together  
 to End Hunger in Oregon  
**October 17, 5:30-7:30pm**  
 at the home of former Senators  
**Ron and Jane Cease**  
 For an invitation with details, email:  
[Jessica@oregonhunger.org](mailto:Jessica@oregonhunger.org)





The Advocacy Alert is published jointly by Oregon Food Bank (OFB) and the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force (OHRTF).

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## Hunger and health are related

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Research has shown that children who are hungry get sick more often and miss more school. They have more ear infections, iron-deficiency anemia, and are hospitalized more frequently. They also have more behavioral issues, becoming socially withdrawn or disruptive.

**Passage of Measure 50 means stronger economic stability for working families in Oregon**  
 Measure 50 would provide

more than 100,000 children with health coverage. Families shouldn't have to choose between food and health care.

### Volunteer and help pass the Healthy Kids Plan

The Yes on 50 Campaign needs to fight millions of dollars of tobacco money blowing into Oregon. Maybe you've already seen the smoke being blown by these TV ads, which are bankrolled by large tobacco interests.

The Yes on 50 Campaign needs volunteers to contact voters and clear the air. Please contact the campaign's field team, Erin Anderson and Molly McGlone, at (503) 239-8800 or [volunteer@healthykids-oregon.org](mailto:volunteer@healthykids-oregon.org).

Please join Oregon Food Bank in the fight against hunger.

**Vote YES on Measure 50 ... because no one should be hungry.**