Through strong public/private partnerships, we can end hunger in the United States. Effective federal nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which works in tandem with a nationwide network of food banks, is a prime example of these partnerships. TEFAP is designed to provide U.S.-grown foods along with financial assistance to store and distribute food.

**TEFAP continues to fall short**

Due to chronic underfunding and the impact of recent sequester cuts, TEFAP falls short in its effort to help offset food banks’ costs to store and distribute food. For six years, TEFAP storage and distribution dollars have been funded at roughly half of their authorized level. When strengthened, TEFAP can better help food banks serve families struggling against hunger. **Congress must fully fund TEFAP storage and distribution funds at $100 million in the Fiscal Year 2015 budget.**

The Oregon Food Bank Network includes 20 regional food banks and more than 900 partner hunger-relief agencies across the state. The network faces numerous challenges. Oregon’s poverty rate is more than 15 percent. In fact, the number of Oregonians living in poverty is greater than the population of Portland. The state’s unemployment rate remains stubbornly high at 7 percent. These economic factors have led to sustained high levels of demand for emergency food assistance over the last several years.

In response, the Oregon Food Bank Network distributed a record amount of food over our last fiscal year – 86.3 million pounds through more than 1 million emergency food boxes and 3.9 million prepared meals. Due to our efforts and the effectiveness of
Four years without electricity or water. “I skip meals every day because my SNAP benefits don’t last through the month. One hundred dollars is gone in no time. The food bank helps me get through.”

I’ve been an auto diesel mechanic for 30 years, but I do everything—carpentry, tractors, cattle, farm work—anything I can find. I work on a cattle ranch every spring, and last year we branded over 300 head of cattle. In Burns, we all do hard jobs like building fences and digging ditches, but that ditch-digging job isn’t there anymore. I was staying with my mother when she died. That was a rough time. I had no food, no money, no nothing. I inherited the house but had to pay the back taxes to keep it, so my only choice was to live for almost four years without electricity or water. I did it to save the house. Otherwise I would have been homeless. I’m out of that situation now and at least now I’ve got power and water. Summer’s not too bad because there’s ranch work, but in the winter there’s not much here. I take every odd job I can find. Winter’s coming on right now and I might have a choice between water or lights. Hopefully work comes up and I won’t have to make that decision this year.

**PORTRAIT OF HUNGER IN OREGON**

the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), we held the line against hunger according to the last USDA food security report (the USDA’s food insecurity rate for Oregon is 13.6 percent). But we are apprehensive about the future and question our ability to keep up with demand for emergency food assistance in Oregon.

**Challenges lie ahead for food banks**

First, SNAP benefits were reduced by the end of the additional ARRA funding on November 1, 2013 and the recently passed farm bill. SNAP benefits previously only lasted two to three weeks. With these cuts, SNAP benefits will run out even earlier, putting additional strain on the OFB Network.

Our second concern is the rising cost of storing and distributing perishable products. In an effort to provide healthy and nutritious food to those we serve, Oregon Food Bank has consistently increased the amount of fresh produce distributed. In fact, the amount of produce we distribute now makes up more than 20 percent of our food supply. As a result, our storage and transportation costs have increased disproportionately. Fresh produce demands maintaining a cold chain from acquisition and storage, to sorting and distribution which leads to the increased costs of refrigerated trucks, coolers, and cold rooms and funds to pay for maintenance and electricity.

**Storage and distribution funds play a critical role for food bank services**

The Oregon Food Bank Network utilizes TEFAP storage and distribution funds to help pay for warehouse staff, facility expenses, utilities, and transportation costs. Last fiscal year, the state

(Continued on back)
Four years without electricity or water

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**CONGRESS MUST END TEFAP FUNDING SHORTFALL**

TOP: One third of children in Oregon are food insecure. BOTTOM: Jan from St. Helens had her public relations job downsized and cashes in bottles and cans to make ends meet.

received $608,000 in TEFAP funds. Almost $59,000 was kept by the Oregon Department of Housing and Community Services for its administrative funds. Of the amount received by Oregon Food Bank, half was passed through to our regional food banks. The remaining $274,500 was dedicated to the operational costs of Oregon Food Bank’s statewide facility and transportation of food to the regional food banks throughout the state. **While TEFAP foods accounted for 27 percent of our food supply, TEFAP storage and distribution funds covered just 5.3 percent of our operations budget.** Ultimately, this shortfall means we must bridge the gap, missing opportunities to leverage other resources, and simply unable to serve more hungry Oregonians.

**Congress must fully appropriate TEFAP storage and distribution funds**

In light of the many challenges Oregon Food Bank faces both presently and into the foreseeable future, along with opportunities to utilize increased funds for both improved service and the leveraging of additional private resources, we urge Congress to fully fund TEFAP storage and distribution funds at $100 million in the Fiscal Year 2015 budget.

To learn more, contact Jeff Kleen at jkleen@oregonfoodbank.org or Jon Stubenvoll at jstubenvoll@oregonfoodbank.org. P.O. Box 55370 Portland, OR 97238-5370 503-282-0555 www.oregonfoodbank.org

**TEFAP: COMPARING FOOD VS STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION ASSISTANCE**

TEFAP shortfall hampers Oregon Food Bank’s ability to serve more hungry Oregonians.

- Percentage provided by TEFAP
- Oregon Food Bank total

Food supply

- 27%

Operations budget

- 5%

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