

June 8, 2023

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Senator Kim Thatcher, S-307
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Senator Suzanne Weber, S-405
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Honourable Senators,

As human service providers, local food systems and community-led organizations, we are very concerned that walkout tactics are again preventing action on the serious challenges we face as a state.

[More than a million Oregonians will seek support](#) from a free food market, pantry or meal site this year as prices rise and grocery budgets shrink. [Nearly 18,000 people are living outdoors](#) and [over 100,000 families are in need of non-existent affordable housing](#). Access to childcare and healthcare is at risk – and one out of every three adults in Oregon report [unmet needs around mental health and addiction](#).

[The recent state revenue forecast](#) proved that Oregon has the resources to do something about these major challenges. We *can* secure comprehensive healthcare and childcare for everyone in our state. We *can* address our housing crisis head-on and provide more affordable options. And we *can* ensure food is available to all Oregonians, no matter where we were born. There is widespread support across rural, urban and suburban communities for action on these and so many other important issues. But none of this will happen until senators return to work.

Our organizations are on the frontlines each day, supporting people and communities struggling with economic hardship, and we cannot succeed without a functioning legislature. Vital services will not be funded. Commonsense policies cannot pass to address the root causes of hunger and poverty. And waiting until the last day or week of the session is too late to make real progress on complex issues like food and housing security – let alone reach agreement on proposals to improve healthcare access and community safety. Oregonians need action now.

It's time for legislators to come together and do what's right for our communities. We need you to return to work now on behalf of Oregon families.

Sincerely,

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Le'o 'o e 'OFA

Jude al-Ghazal Stone
ACLU of Oregon

Gatlin Alshuyukh
Plaza de Nuestra Comunidad

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Dana Hepper
Children's Institute

Cameron Herrington
Oregon Housing Alliance

Zora Hess
Community Activist & Advocate

Edward B. Hill
Black Food Sovereignty Coalition

Molly Hogan
Welcome Home Coalition

Ali Ibrahim
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Jackie Leung
Micronesian Islander Community

Tonia Lordy
Home Orchard Education Center

Yana Ludwig
North Coast Food Web

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Oregon Pacific Islander Coalition

Ivy Major-McDowall
Our Children Oregon

Liz Marquez Gutierrez
**Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
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Community Alliance of Tenants

Nancy Mitchell
Food Share of Lincoln County

Ana Molina
Oregon Just Transition Alliance

Susannah Morgan
Oregon Food Bank

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Thrive Umpqua

Isa Peña
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Louise Shirley
High Desert Food and Farm Alliance (HDIFFA)

Jason Skipton
Growing Gardens

Marielle Slater
Bend Farmers Market

Frank So
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

Heather Stuart
Fair Shot for All Coalition

A. Christina Stucker-Gassi
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides

Josephine Sze
Josephine County Food Bank

Cayle Tern
**Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
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Amy Wong
Oregon Organic Coalition

Jim White
Nonprofit Association of Oregon