



KAIZEN FOOD RESCUE

Thai Nguyen  
Executive Director  
Kaizen Food Rescue  
2900 S. Shoshone St.  
Englewood, CO 80110

Dear Senator/Representative:

I have been a Hunger Relief Partner of Food Bank of the Rockies since July 2019. As the Founder and Executive Director of Kaizen Food Rescue, I strongly believe that we need to do everything we can to help every Coloradan thrive. Food security is essential to achieving this goal, and by partnering with Food Bank of the Rockies, we've been able to grow our food distributions to better meet the needs of our neighbors.

In fiscal year 2022, Kaizen Food Rescue sourced over 3.5 million pounds of food from Food Bank of the Rockies, which equates to enough food for over 2.9 million meals. By collaborating with them, we are able to obtain nutritious, culturally relevant, and fresh foods. Our communities depend on the food we distribute every day, and this partnership enables us to better serve all of our neighbors — together.

From pineapples and masa flour to diapers and pet food, through our partnership with the Food Bank we are able to distribute food and necessities to hard-working people as inflation continues to remain high and paychecks can only be stretched so far. With the recent end of the SNAP Emergency Allotment Benefit, we are anticipating even more need for critical essentials like food. Our collaboration with Food Bank of the Rockies will help us provide for our neighbors in the ways they need us and have a real impact — something I see whenever I'm at one of our distributions.

I support Food Bank of the Rockies' application for congressional funding. Increased capacity for Food Bank of the Rockies — including more reliable vehicles and kitchen space — would mean even more food for partners like us and more opportunities for collaboration. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we partnered with the Food Bank to distribute meals prepared in their kitchen to community members who were unhoused. Due to insufficient kitchen capacity and an increase in need for meals for children, the program was discontinued. With increased capacity, we would have more opportunities to innovate together to nourish our communities.

I continue to appreciate their critical support of and positive partnership with Kaizen Food Rescue.

Sincerely,

Thai Nguyen  
Founder & Executive Director  
Kaizen Food Rescue



**COLORADO**  
Office of Economic Security  
Department of Human Services

March 10, 2023

Dear Representative,

The Colorado Department of Human Services has recently received funding through a supplemental bill signed by Governor Jared Polis allocating \$14 million to food banks and food pantries serving Coloradans across our great state. We recognize the increased need these organizations are facing given the end of SNAP Emergency Allotments on March 1. At the same time, we know this funding represents just 2% of the lost SNAP benefits Coloradans are facing. While this bill isn't a complete solution, it is a start. Organizations like Food Bank of the Rockies complete the rest of the puzzle when it comes to answering the challenge of hunger.

As the largest hunger-relief organization in the Rocky Mountain region, Food Bank the Rockies in fiscal year 2022 distributed over 80.5 million pounds of food to more than 460,000 individuals. That's the equivalent of nearly 178,000 meals every day.

Last year, Food Bank of the Rockies also had to triple the amount of money they were spending pre-COVID to purchase food due to increased need and decreases in donated and USDA food. With the end of the SNAP Emergency Allotments, the Food Bank is gearing up for an even larger increase in need across their service area (the largest of any food bank in the contiguous United States!). Their work has never been more critical in our lifetimes than now.

Food Bank of the Rockies outgrew its current Denver distribution center long before the COVID-19 pandemic. Since purchasing the building in 2006, Colorado's population has grown 22% and is continuing to grow. To better serve the community while preparing for future needs, investing in a larger and improved facility in the Denver metro area is critical. That's why the Food Bank is planning to build a new facility, breaking ground later this year.

The new facility will enable Food Bank of the Rockies to increase food distribution to their 800+ Hunger Relief Partners due to expanded dock space, a new fleet of reliable vehicles equipped for all seasons and road conditions, and more space for storing items like fresh, locally sourced produce. It will allow them to grow their programming to better serve children, community



members who are unhoused, and other groups thanks to a larger kitchen. Among other things, it will also lower their operating costs thanks to sustainable measures like solar panels.

On behalf of all of CDHS, I highly encourage you to support this request for infrastructure support. Food Bank of the Rockies is central to our charitable food ecosystem and I am honored to support their work.

Sincerely,

*Michelle Barnes*

Michelle Barnes  
Executive Director  
Colorado Department of Human Services



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