

Referendum to Address Food Insecurity at WWU

*Officially Approved for ballot by AS Senate and AS Executive Board as sponsored and drafted by
Lola Thompson, AS Senator - CENV*

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

By supporting this referendum, you are affirming a commitment to fight food insecurity at Western. Students and staff have made it clear that additional resources are necessary to both sustain and expand beyond the on-campus food pantries. For \$4.50, students could help build a stronger, more resilient community at Western.

This referendum would permit the AS to collect a \$4.50 fee during fall, winter, and spring quarters from full-time students who attend courses on WWU's Bellingham campus. This fund shall be used by the AS Western Hub of Living Essentials (WHOLE) pantry to hire a full-time staff member for a two-year term to help orchestrate food distribution and work towards systemic, long-term solutions which reduce reliance on pantries. The remaining funds will be used to purchase food stock to be distributed to all pantries on campus as appropriate. This referendum shall be re-evaluated by ASWWU constituents every second election, with the first re-evaluation occurring the academic year following the staff member's hiring.

We students are uniquely vulnerable to food insecurity, but we also have the unique capacity to enact positive change. It is not our responsibility to pick up the slack left by our State Representatives and University Administration, but we still have the opportunity to make a tangible impact in our community. This referendum will not end food insecurity, but it will make conditions better for students in the short term and we address food security through structural solutions long-term.