



Rep. Tom Emmer on House Committee Hearing

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****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Thank you, Mr. Emmer, for five minutes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thanks again to the panel. Sorry, I had to come in just a little bit late, but I haven't missed anything since. I want to thank you not only for being here, but for your candor. I think sometimes we tend to think, at least in my experience starting at a State level, that just because we've been doing something a certain way means that we have to keep doing it that way. We might add to it, but we keep doing it. And I think you and your experience, your testimony here today proves otherwise. I understand that everybody's taking a very clear approach that you want to be in addition to SNAP benefits, but I will tell you, my coming here today wasn't about that. I want to know more about what I think are successful programs that are community-based from the ground up instead of from the top down. Personally, working with faith communities, working with interested individuals in my home State, frankly, doing it myself, I find that the connection with the individual in need, which I think is some of the personal experience we've heard today, is better for both of the individuals involved, and I think somebody said years ago, it's probably already been stated here today, that a hand up is much better than a hand out. That being said, I also get a little nervous when I hear the testimony today because, to be critical, there were questions that were asked earlier, please tell us what the government structure is doing to restrict your ability, and everybody sat at the table and was frozen. And I do appreciate you trying to be very statesman-like in the answers, but going forward, I think people get a little territorial and people worry about you have to work with these folks every day and you need the partnership so you don't want to create any unnecessary tension. But we need to know what those potential obstacles and difficulties are because, frankly, the future of the system is going to be more based on you and your experiences on the ground and the innovation that you're looking to create. That's what people up on this side of the dais need to hear about and understand in order to make those votes that are so important. So even though I hate the statements, I just made one and I want you to understand that I'm just learning. As one of the new people here, the bad news about us new people is that we have a lot to learn. The good news is that we don't know everything yet, so we can still learn. Mr. Webb, if I could, you talked about your recommendations and you gave a list of three. It struck me that, and we just had a question about, you know, can you tell us how much is provided from one source versus from another source? I want to talk about measurements and impacts. Can you tell me how you're measuring the impact? If others want to add to this, because I want to know how I can quantify it when I have to make policy decisions. So domestically?

****MR. WEBB:**

** Yes. At this point domestically, our measurement is around number of meals served, amount of pounds of food, millions of pounds of food distributed, those type of pieces. And we are building research now to identify some of the health implications of moving people into different situations. But right now it's based on meals served and millions of pounds that are distributed. And in our opinion, there's a difference in what takes place internationally because we actually measure how we're moving people from one situation to the next. And if I could use an analogy, it would be almost like someone trying to get healthier and measuring the amount of weight they can lift. Yet maybe one component of it, but you need to have maybe measure BMI, cholesterol, those sort of things to make an informed decision about how you're moving your health. And I guess that's



where I was coming from. One side is production, how much you're producing, how much you're providing. But the other one is results, which is Ms. Green-Patton, when you talk about results.

****MS. GREEN-PATTON:**

** I think you've raised an incredibly important point in that more of us, we need to more and more think about the health of the people that we're serving. And this idea, you know, from our perspective, food is medicine. And it's not just about moving pounds. It's not just about the throughput, but it's also thinking about the health impact. And so food banks all across this country are engaged in partnerships with health systems, with hospitals, and we are measuring the health.

****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** I'm running out of time, so I just want to say, if you could get us that information, it would be very helpful for somebody like me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

****JENNIFER STEINBERG:**

** Thank you, Jennifer Steinberg.

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