



To: Members of the House Revenue Committee
From: Annie Kirschner, Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon
Date: March 1, 2021
Re: Support for HB 2819

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Werner Reschke and members of the Committee,

Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon is a statewide anti-poverty advocacy organization and we write today in support of HB 2819, Leave No Worker Behind.

At Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon we understand that hunger and poverty do not exist on their own, but rather as a result of overlapping systems of oppression that create layers of privilege and inequity. Our values and work are centered in creating systemic changes to end hunger, including the redistribution of resources and power to communities who have been disproportionately affected by systems of violence.

The state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) has long been a critical tool to reduce poverty in Oregon. While the state has made efforts to increase the value of the EITC and increase outreach to eligible households, we feel it's an injustice that the current law excludes some workers. HB 2819 supports the wellbeing of our communities by allowing all income-eligible workers in Oregon to claim the state's EITC, regardless of how they file their taxes.

HB 2819 addresses the current exclusion of certain workers, many deemed essential, across agriculture, food-processing, retail, and construction sectors, from use of the EITC. Under current EITC regulations workers who utilize an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), some 34,000 Oregon families, are excluded from claiming the EITC.

Under current policy, the EITC is denied to everyone in a household if one member files their taxes with an ITIN. Passing HB 2819 means that 90,000 U.S. citizens living in mixed-status households in Oregon will benefit from the EITC, most of whom are children.

Ensuring the EITC serves all workers moves our state toward prosperity for everyone. It improves the economic security of working families, improves life prospects of children, supports the vitality of Oregon communities, and advances racial equity in our state. At Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon we know we must utilize *all* tools available to ensure the economic security of Oregonians and their ability to provide for themselves and their families. Expanding access of the EITC to workers utilizing an ITIN is one such tool.

We urge your support of HB 2819 to ensure that all Oregonians have access to the financial resources necessary to support safe and healthy families.