

2/27/23

Yes on SB 610- Food For All Oregonians

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Robinson, Members of the Committee:

My name is Sarah Grace and I live in Eugene, Oregon and I am writing in support of Senate Bill 610, Food For All Oregonians which would ensure all of our neighbors, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy. I fully support this bill as I believe that all people, regardless of any status, are entitled to the food they need to survive. By providing money to families to buy groceries, each family is able to make the purchases that will provide the best nutrition and dietary needs for them. Hunger was a crisis in our communities before the pandemic, and the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 have fallen hardest on newly-arrived Oregonians. Immigrants, refugees and Compact of Free Association (COFA) community members, in particular, have long faced higher rates of hunger and poverty in Oregon. Just one example: Latinx and Pacific Islander Oregonians experienced hunger at twice the rate of white Oregonians pre-pandemic – and this gap has only widened as our communities continue to struggle with COVID's ongoing impact and the rising cost of living. Food for All Oregonians will create a state-funded program that eliminates exclusions to SNAP and make applying for assistance more welcoming. Efforts from this program will not go unnoticed, as the bill will ensure everyone is aware of this needed support through community navigation and outreach, language access, and so on. Not only will this bill provide assistance to the people who need it most, it will also benefit our communities by creating a system of trust and safety for those who live there. We know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. Kids do better in school, our families' health and well-being improves, and our economy thrives through the support of local businesses. This is true in every corner of Oregon—in rural, urban, and suburban communities alike. When all of our neighbors are getting the food that they need, all of Oregon thrives. Please support our communities, by supporting this bill. This is why I am urging your yes vote on SB 610. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Sarah Grace