
Date: February 22, 2023

To: Chair Senator Sara Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Senator Art Robinson, and Senate Committee On Human Services

From: Joanne Mina
Alianza Poder Network Coordinator
Capaces Leadership Institute
356 Young St, Woodburn, OR 97071

RE: Letter of Support for SB 610

Dear Senate Committee On Human Services,

I write on behalf of the Central Oregon Immigrant community to express our full support for SB 610 Food for All Oregonians Program which establishes a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to provide nutrition assistance to residents of this state who would qualify for federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program but for immigration status. Central Oregon believes food is a basic human right and a resource that we must make accessible to all in order to have a thriving Oregon.

Food For All Oregonians is a strategic investment in the long term wellbeing of Oregon.

Culture, tradition and love are shared and passed on from one generation to another via food. Our ancestors had a relationship with food that was symbiotic, reciprocal and spiritual but with the clash of cultures food became a weapon to erase culture and peoples all together. The foods we grow up with are a source of reconnection with love, music, family and celebration and for many a direct line of connection with our history, ancestors and way of life. For youth all these are also a source of emotional support and a preventative tool for mental health distress.

We know that food is fuel and key to maintaining good health however in Oregon low nutritional foods are far more accessible than fresh fruits and vegetables and I hope all legislators support making healthy foods accessible to All low income Oregonians regardless of their country of origin.

The Oregon high desert experiences extreme inclement weather in comparison to other parts of Oregon. Our summers are hotter and our winters are colder than the Portland area, which means it takes a lot more money to keep our homes at safe and comfortable temperatures. From a couple of weeks in single digits during the winter to several weeks of 100 degree weather during the summer we know that extreme weather will only continue so families will have to spend more year after year on energy costs. Having to negotiate what to pay for every month is a task

that many families face and as food prices go up we will see more high calories - low nutrition foods in low income family's pantries. Oregon lawmakers should not turn a blind eye to this inequity that will have long term effects for Oregon.

Additionally, farmworkers in Jefferson & Crook county don't have the ability to move from crop to crop and work year around, when the season is over or the water gets cut off early farm workers lose their source of income and have to rely on their savings during the cold winter months. This is a disparity that contrasts with migrant farmworkers in other areas of Oregon that are able to work year around. Children are negatively impacted because the rhetoric from the 45th president is deep in the minds of Brown and Black migrants in rural Oregon and many families opted out of all support for their children including summer food programs sponsored by the school districts.

Immigrant Indigenous communities in Central Oregon like the Purepecha community have to rely on information in Spanish to access any support so this creates additional barriers for people. Our food banks are not equipped to support this community of interest so standardizing the food safety net in Oregon will guarantee support for communities that go ignored.

Oregon's value of caring for one another aligns with the core values of Food For All Oregonians and our work would strengthen with the passing of SB 610. The goal of extending our food safety net without exclusion to our lowest paid workers across rural and urban Oregon would support families, local economies, and would be a solid investment in Oregon's future.

We urge you to support SB 610 and make Food For All a reality for non- citizen Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Joanne Mina
City Of Bend Human Rights And Equity Commission Vice-Chair
Alianza Poder Network Coordinator

Elizabeth Sanchez
Language Access Coordinator at Deschutes County
Founder of English 2 Spanish
Board member of High Desert ESD and Latino Community Association

Zavier Borja
Founder of Vamonos Outside
Bend Parks and Recreation Board Member, position 4
Board President Latino Community Association
City of Bend, Community Relations Manager