
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

February 27, 2023

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

On behalf of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, I am writing to express **support for 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.

Hunger was a crisis in our communities well 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-pandemic¹ — and this gap has only widened as our communities continue to struggle with COVID's ongoing impact and the rising cost of living.

At PPAO, we believe that all people in our community should be able to meet their basic needs, regardless of their immigration status. That is why we fought to ensure that Oregonians without immigration status were able to access the reproductive and sexual healthcare they need in the Reproductive Health Equity Act in 2017. Oregon has taken many steps to ensure that everyone in our state can access the health care they need through policies like RHEA, Cover All Kids, and Cover All People.

Many of the individuals and families who would benefit from SB 610 are the same folks who visit Planned Parenthood health centers to access the reproductive and sexual healthcare they need to stay healthy. Being able to maintain a nutritious diet is a foundational determinant of a person's health and creating access to the food families need is critical to ensuring that parents can raise their children in safe and sustainable conditions.

At PPAO, we know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. SB 610 will allow kids to do better in school, our families' health and well-being improves, and our economy thrives through the support of local businesses. This will be 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.

This is why we urge your yes vote on SB 610.

Sincerely,

Cassie Purdy
Political Director
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

¹https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_at_arrival_of_covid_2018-2020.pdf