

Submitter: Natasha Sherwood
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure: SB610

I support SB 610 because it is good for Oregon. All of our neighbors in Oregon must have access to food, regardless of where they were born.

Hunger was a crisis in our communities before the pandemic, and the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 have fallen hardest on our immigrant and refugee neighbors. Immigrants, refugees and other marginalized community members have long faced higher rates of hunger and poverty in Oregon. Just one example: Latina 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-19'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.

*Food for All Oregonians makes food assistance available to all Oregonians, regardless of immigration status.

*It provides families with money for groceries that matches federal SNAP food assistance benefits.

*It ensures everyone is aware of this vital support through community navigation and outreach, improved language access and more.

*It will build on successful, community-driven navigator models to ensure trust and community safety.

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 pass SB 610.