

Date: 2/27/2023

To: Senate Committee on Human Services

RE: Support SB 610

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Robinson, and members of the Committee,

My name is Victorina C. and I live in the city of Hillsboro. I am writing in support of Senate Bill SB 610, Food for All Oregonians, which would ensure all our neighbors, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy.

Although there have been significant investments, the state's food assistance policies leave a huge number of Oregonians behind because of their immigration status or other arbitrary factors. Among those who cannot access SNAP are Dreamers, people with Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and undocumented immigrants who are in the process of applying for asylum.

During the pandemic, my husband who worked in a restaurant lost his job and I became the sole breadwinner. My income as a migrant farm worker was not enough to cover all our needs. Fixed expenses such as rent, and utilities had to be covered. This made us dependent on food banks. My neighbors and co-workers, who were in the same situation, would let us know where the food pantries were open.

Fortunately, we have the opportunity to pass the Food for All Oregonians Initiative (SB 610) which will allow access to food assistance to all Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, and provide families with money to purchase groceries that will match SNAP food assistance benefits.

When all Oregon families can access food, all our children will do better in school, improve their mental health, and promote family well-being. I have witnessed in my community how families sacrifice food to meet other non-negotiable needs like rent. We rely on what food banks can give us, which doesn't always help people with chronic illnesses like diabetes or high blood pressure, which are more common in communities of color.

I ask for your support with this important bill! Show your support by voting yes on SB 610, Food for All Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Victoria C.