

February 27, 2023

Re: Food for All Oregonians, SB 610

Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Francisco Aguirre, Executive Director of Viva Inclusive Migrant Network. I live in Multnomah County in Oregon. I want to thank every one of you and all the nonprofit organizations and individuals who have been working vigorously in favor of our community. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and share my testimony on an issue that is of great importance to me and our community in this beautiful State of Oregon.

I have been living in this state for 26 years and I have seen with my own eyes the economic contribution by our immigrant community. With honor, I have walked hand in hand with our immigrants to fight for a better Oregon. Yet, our people are hungry. Hungry for a better Oregon but most important hungry for healthy and adequate Food for All Oregonians, including undocumented Oregonians.

I want to show you a photo of a 19-year-old boy whom after his family was harassed by the Department of Human Services, the boy felt forced to abandon his immigration case and migrate back to a country where his life was at risk, after entering the United States as an unaccompanied minor fleeing violence and threats in El Salvador. In less than a month of fleeing back to El Salvador, he got killed. That boy is my son, Moises, during our worse time when we did not have enough to eat and when our water and electricity were cut off because we did not have enough to pay for the services. At that time, we had no choice but to ask for food assistance for my two USC daughters. Many families have hesitated to ask for food stamps/SNAP because of fear of getting deported or having this negatively affect their immigration case.

You are our State Representatives with the responsibility to represent the community you signed up to serve. We, documented and undocumented, are hungry for culturally and healthy food. I am here today to respectfully ask that you vote in favor of SB 610, Food for All Oregonians. We need to properly feed our children, who are the future of Oregon, the future of this country.

Sincerely,

Francisco Aguirre