

March 5, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

I remember having \$10.56 in my checking account as a 1st generation college student navigating higher education. I moved 3 hours away for school since at the time it was hard due to my status to access a school closer to my home and was struggling to make ends meet. My immigrant grandmother worked as a housekeeper and made minimum wage at the time. She would send me \$40.00 from her hard earned money to help me pay for my weekly food expenses. My grandma did while not being able to afford food herself and knowing that my education was the only thing I'd inherit from her.

Every day, millions of dollars in taxes are paid from hard working immigrant Oregonians. According to the American Immigration Council in 2023 immigrant Oregonians paid \$5.6B in federal & state taxes, and undocumented Oregonians paid \$257.9M in state & local taxes. It's unfortunate that because of where we were born we are expected to pay into the same systems that don't support us in times of need.

We deserve the same access. We need Food For All Oregonians because we don't leave folks out in Oregon, **if anything we show up for people and fight to be inclusive!** As a young student, this program would have made such a big difference and supported me tremendously. In these moments, when our mixed status families are worried about family separation, we must support Youth and Elders to not have to choose between food and rent, food and heat, food and school supplies. We are the **only** state in the West Coast who doesn't have a program like this. Oregon is a champion for immigrant rights and our budget should reflect this.

Please vote YES to SB 611 for our Youth and Elders. Like we say in our dichos, "Hoy por ti, Manana por mi", "Today for you, tomorrow for me".

Thank you,

Paola