

Submitter: Nicole Kalk
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB611

Members of the Human Services Committee

I write today to express strong opposition to Senate Bill 611, which proposes to establish the Food for All Oregonians Program. This bill is fiscally irresponsible given Oregon's current economic challenges and budgetary constraints.

1. Oregon's Economic Decline - Our state is facing a critical economic slowdown:

- Oregon's GDP growth has fallen behind the U.S. by an average of 1.5 percentage points in the last year.
- We've lost 2,500 manufacturing jobs between December 2023 and December 2024.
- Year-over-year employment is down in manufacturing, leisure and hospitality, and many other private-sector industries.

2. Fiscal Responsibility and Limited Resources - While the 2025-27 biennium budget shows a 6% increase in available resources, we must exercise extreme caution:

- From 2025-33, Oregon general fund revenues are projected to grow by only 10.7%, compared to 15.1% growth from 2021-25.
- Factors contributing to this slower growth include reduced in-migration, an aging workforce, and the concerning out-migration of high-income earners.

3. Prioritizing Economic Growth - Instead of creating new entitlement programs, we should focus on:

- Attracting businesses and high-paying jobs to reverse the "manufacturing recession".
- Addressing the root causes of food insecurity through workforce development and economic policies that encourage job creation.
- Implementing targeted tax relief to stimulate private sector growth and retain high-income earners.

5. Sustainable Solutions - Rather than expanding state obligations, we must:

- Reform existing nutrition assistance programs to be more efficient and cost-effective.
- Encourage private sector and faith-based initiatives to address food insecurity.
- Focus on creating an environment that fosters economic opportunity and self-reliance.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 611 represents an expansion of government that Oregon simply cannot afford. Our state is already struggling with economic decline and poor national rankings. We must prioritize fiscal responsibility, economic growth, and job

creation before considering any new social programs.

I urge the legislature to reject Senate Bill 611 and instead focus on policies that will revitalize Oregon's economy and create opportunities for all Oregonians to prosper. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole