

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 611

Members of the committee, my name is Jessica, from Malheur county, and I write to you today not only as a citizen but as someone who has witnessed firsthand the profound impact of food security, or its absence, on the lives of individuals and families in Oregon. First, I wanted to thank the sponsors and co-sponsors to this bill, especially those who may have received push-back.

We all share in the fundamental beliefs in the inherent dignity of every human being and a commitment to ensuring that every person has the opportunity to thrive. These shared values compel us to address the difficult issue of food insecurity that directly impacts the lives of Oregonians on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, far too many individuals and families in our state are struggling to access the essential benefits that would ensure their basic needs are met. Growing up, I witnessed my single mother navigate the complexities of food assistance, and I know how vital these programs are for survival. As an educational support provider for children aged 0-5, through my lived experience working with children facing food insecurity, I've seen the devastating effects of hunger on development, learning, and overall well-being. The current system often leaves the most vulnerable populations behind, creating unnecessary barriers and perpetuating cycles of poverty over their immigration status.

This is why I wholeheartedly support Senate Bill 611 Food for All Oregonians. This bill represents a crucial step towards expanding access to SNAP benefits for all Oregonians experiencing food insecurity, by helping those at both ends of the age spectrum in our state. This legislation will directly address the gaps in our current system and provide critical support to those who need it most. It will allow families to focus on building a better future, rather than worrying about where their next meal will come from.

Therefore, I strongly encourage you, as legislators dedicated to the well-being of our community, to vote in favor of Senate Bill 611 Food for All Oregonians. Your support will make a tangible difference in the lives of so many individuals, ensuring that every Oregonian has the opportunity to live with dignity and food security. Oregon should be the leader as an example of defending basic human rights, especially in the current context of actions by the federal government. Thank you, again, for your support of SB 611 Food for All Oregonians.

Sincerely,
Jessica Vialpando