



TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Adelante Mujeres - Produce Prescription (Rx) Program

SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

My name is Lucia Benavides, the Produce Prescription (Rx) Coordinator at Adelante Mujeres. My organization is in **strong support of Senate Bill 611**, Food for All Oregonians which would ensure Youth and Elderly Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy.

Adelante Mujeres is a nonprofit organization in Forest Grove dedicated to the education and empowerment of Latina women and their families in Washington County and beyond. We provide holistic education and support to help individuals and families achieve their full potential, fostering leadership, equity, and community well-being. Through programs like our Produce Prescription (Produce Rx) initiative, we address critical issues such as food insecurity, health equity, and economic empowerment, ensuring that our community members have the resources they need to thrive.

At Adelante Mujeres' Produce Rx Program, we witness firsthand the challenges that many community members with diet-related chronic illnesses face in accessing nutritious food to help them manage their disease. We work closely with individuals and families struggling with food insecurity who, due to their chronic illnesses, cannot consume the food commonly available at local food banks. These individuals rely on fresh produce as a critical component of their diet, and we have seen how access to healthy, nutritious food can lead to significant health improvements and, in some cases, even the reversal of their condition.

As a Community Health Worker and program operator, I often struggle to connect our 50 families—226 individuals—with the nutritious food they need to manage their chronic condition once they are out of the program. Too often, I see familiar names reappear on our waiting list, not because they lack the motivation or knowledge to maintain a healthy diet, but because they are systematically excluded from Food Incentive Programs due to their immigration status. Despite their efforts to prioritize their health, many of our participants find themselves forced to return to inexpensive, highly processed foods that worsen their conditions. This cycle of temporary assistance, followed by a return to food insecurity, not only undermines the progress they have made but also places them at higher risk for preventable health complications.

This bill would help struggling immigrants, refugees, and families across our state. These are our neighbors, our family, our friends, our students, the children our kids play with, our coworkers and their loved ones—the people who help make Oregon a beautiful place to live. Ensuring



equitable access to food is essential to the well-being of our communities. That is why we urge your support for SB 611 to make food security a reality for every Oregonian, regardless of their background or immigration status. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Lucia Benavides