

Submitter:

Caleb Butler

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB611

I wanted to start by telling you thank you! Thank you for taking the time out of your cumbersome schedules to hear the opinions of your constituents and the opinions of those who may fall outside of your purview. I also want you to know how much I appreciate all of you. Frequently the reward for public service is a demonization due to the perception of legal failings. A perception that states “your out of touch with the common person, because you forget where you come from!” Easily forgetting the dedication to ensuring that all whom are governed are protected, even if it doesn't feel that way. My name is Caleb Lombardo Butler. I am a third generation Sicilian American. My family on both sides are immigrants, who immigrated to this great nation at very different periods in our American history. They immigrated to pursue the extraordinary American promise. A declared challenge that if you were willing to risk everything, you too could achieve life, liberty, and happiness. This divine right, a belief of equality, is being challenged by a domestic threat. I have worked with Portland Open Bible Community Pantry for 2 years. Our Pantry has served on the front lines an epidemic that should exist in our current era. During my continuance, I noticed an increase of Ukrainian refugees. Refugees who fled a war torn country in hopes for a better life, they have been faced with opposition. Our pantry works to offset that opposition that is faced by many of our neighbors. This opposition comes from a disparity that cripples those disadvantaged in our communities, because of inadequate fiscal ability. I remember a story that my Mom would tell me, a story of a battle, between our Sicilian family and a neighboring Greek family over a section of Griffith Park that accommodated larger families. This conflict was waged for many years, but it would always end in the same ironic fashion. By the end of the night all of the men would be drunk and dancing together. It was waged because of a desire to protect our respective families interests, easily forgetting, that in times of celebration our merriment united us irrelevant to our affiliations. This disparagement causes all of us to have a blindness towards our fellow Americans irrelevant to the milestones in citizenship. There once was a young man walking to another city, along his way a gang attacked him and left him half dead in the street. A community leader and a lawyer both, separately avoided the young man. They didn't feel it was their problem and they were concerned about potential legal ramifications. However, a Samaritan, who were a hated people group at that time, saw the young man and had compassion on him. The Samaritan brought the young man to a place to receive care, gave the caretaker a significant amount of money, and instructed them to bring the man to health. The Samaritan promised to pay whatever extra was spent, when they returned. Jesus asked, “who of the three proved to be the neighbor. One of the people responded, “the one who showed mercy.” Jesus instructed them, “you go and

do likewise.” I’m requesting that you join me in support of Food for all Oregonians. I’m asking you to do this because it is the right thing to do and these are our neighbors.