

Submitter: Benjamin BenBaruch  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB611  
TO: Senate Committee on Human Services  
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

I am asking for your 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. I am asking for your support in moving this bill forward and your support in getting it passed when it comes to the floor.

Food is not optional. Everyone needs healthy food. Nobody should face hunger. Nobody should lack healthy nutritious food for any reason.

One of the saddest periods in my life was at the beginning of the school year when I started junior high school. The day started off with excitement and a little trepidation because I was going to a new school and a building I had only known from the outside. I didn't know where my locker was. I didn't know the layout of where the classrooms were or that there were different sections of the school for the science and music classes. But I was excited to be going back to school and excited that I was now in junior high school.

And I was excited to be seeing my good friend Danny who I had not seen since the last day of school in June. I know that Danny showed up for the first day of school because we were in the same 2nd period English class. So I was looking forward to seeing him at lunch. But I didn't see him at lunch. Not that first day and not the 2nd day. It turned out that Danny wasn't attending lunch because he couldn't afford the (lousy) cafeteria food and his mother didn't have any food for him to bring to school. So for the first month of school I brought two sandwiches to school every day. But sometime in October Danny stopped coming to school. I later found out that his family couldn't afford the rent and had to move away. I never saw Danny again. But I remember that time and I remember how difficult it was for Danny. When he came to my house after school and stayed for dinner he was always shy and embarrassed. I of course never went to his house for dinner.

Whenever I see hungry or homeless people I always remember Danny. And to this day I still cannot quite understand how it is possible in the richest country in the world for people to go without food and shelter.

Please do what you can to make sure that there is as little hunger in Oregon as possible, that everyone has enough healthy food and nutrition.