

TO: Joint Ways & Means Committee
SUBJECT: Yes on Food for All Oregonians (SB 611)

Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Natalie and I live in Beaverton. I am writing in strong support of Food For All Oregonians (Senate Bill 611) 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 grew up in a household living check-to-check, where all members had to contribute in order to have dinner; I feel the strong need to advocate for supporting others going through the same situation.

I have volunteered in food pantries and am always happy and grateful to help and support our community. One experience, in particular, was when I was volunteering at my old school, Conestoga Middle School in Beaverton, Oregon, as a tutor and other tasks. For a while, I was cleaning and restocking their food pantry, which I was unaware they had, which could have benefitted me. I was heartbroken seeing that one student had to ask us if she could take food for her household. She was given a backpack to carry the food to hide it and avoid feeling embarrassed in front of other students. When she left, her mom was in the front office holding a baby, a quiet reminder of the challenges their family was facing.

We know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. Kids do better in school, our families' health and well-being improve, and our economy thrives through the support of local businesses. This is true in every corner of Oregon—in rural, urban, and suburban communities alike. When all of our neighbors are getting the food that they need, all of Oregon thrives.

This is why I am urging you to include SB 611 in Oregon's budget. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Natalie J.
Beaverton, District 14th.