



TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

We are writing in strong support, both personally and on behalf of our congregation, 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.

Our food distribution program, known as Community Table, has been stretched to capacity in the last year with an over 30% increase in demand. SB611 would feed more people more efficiently. In turn, it would lessen the strain on our food pantry.

Oregon is facing a hunger crisis, and it is getting worse. Today, 1 in 6 children in Oregon don't have enough to eat, and one-third more Oregonians face hunger than before the COVID-19 pandemic. Food pantries across the state are confronting record-breaking levels of demand— the Oregon Food Bank has never seen this level of urgent need in its 40+ years of food banking.

These are our neighbors, our family, our friends, the children our kids play with, the people who help make Oregon a beautiful place to live. Access to food should not depend on where we were born. We urge you to envision an Oregon where anyone who needs food can get it.

Our congregation supports both feeding those in need and welcoming the stranger. On behalf of our congregation, this is why we support SB 611. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Patti Welch
Lead Pastor

Best Brashear
Associate Pastor