

Senate Committee on Human Services
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

My name is **Elva Webster**, and I am writing today in **strong support of Senate Bill 611**.

I am originally from Michoacán, Mexico, and I have lived in Oregon for 25 years. Today, I stand before you, first and foremost, as a member of this community to share my personal experience with food assistance access. I also speak on behalf of **PLAZA de Nuestra Comunidad**.

I have the privilege of being a U.S. citizen, which allows me to qualify for government assistance programs. However, years ago, I experienced firsthand the immense stress felt by those who do not have the same opportunity.

In 2002, while pregnant with twins, I was unable to work due to my condition. Later, during my immigration process, I could not access any form of assistance. I found support through community organizations and the generosity of individuals, but I was **ineligible for food stamps**—a resource that, at the time, would have given me a tremendous sense of security and control over my well-being and that of my daughters.

Today, in my work, I serve the Latino and immigrant community. Coordinating community gardens, and assisting people in growing their own organic food. But this **is not enough**. Many of our community members, especially undocumented immigrants, face disproportionately high rates of food insecurity compared to other Oregonians.

My hope is that **no child in my community goes to school hungry**, that **no single mother struggles to put food on the table**, and that **no family lives in fear of where their next meal will come from**. I also hope that our government will stand with us in this mission.

Today, I urge you to join this effort. **Every person in Oregon deserves the peace of mind of knowing they have enough to eat.**

Food insecurity is a complex issue, with many factors beyond our control. But **today, we have an opportunity to make a real difference. Passing Senate Bill 611, would be a critical step in ensuring that everyone in our state has access to this essential resource.**

After 22 years of living in Oregon, I have learned a great deal about what it means to be part of this community. **I believe it is only fair that all Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, have access to food assistance—because we all contribute to the economy and well-being of this state.**

That is why I strongly urge you to vote **YES on SB 611**.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Elva Webster

Gardens and Community Engagement Coordinator, PLAZA de Nuestra Comunidad