

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

My name is Ivy Major-McDowall, and I live in SE Portland. I am writing to express my personal **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.

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.

Despite paying billions in annual taxes in Oregon, immigrant Oregonians are twice as likely to face hunger and poverty in our state. Thousands of immigrant and refugee Oregonians are excluded from vital food assistance due to their immigration status.

At a time when we face potential federal rollbacks of critical safety net programs, Oregon must step up to protect our most vulnerable populations, particularly our children, elderly, and immigrant communities. Our State can lead by example and fulfill our commitment to care for all who call Oregon home.

Access to food should never depend on where someone was born. **I urge you to envision an Oregon where anyone who needs food can get it.**

Food for All Oregonians (SB 611) will allow low-income Youth and Elder Oregonians to access the grocery benefits they need to thrive. These are Youth and Elders who are currently excluded from SNAP solely due to immigration status. Food for All will build on successful, community-driven navigator models to ensure trust and community safety.

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 improves, 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 your YES vote on SB 611. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Ivy Major-McDowall

Views expressed are my own and do not reflect the position of any organization I'm affiliated with.