

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services  
FROM: Josephine Sze, Chair of the Oregon Food Bank Network  
Executive Director Josephine County Food Bank  
RE: SB 611  
DATE: March 25, 2025



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

For the record, my name is Josephine Sze. I serve as the Chair of the Oregon Food Bank Network and as the Executive Director of Josephine County Food Bank. I am here today, speaking on behalf of the Oregon Food Bank Network, in strong support of Senate Bill 611, Food for All Oregonians, because food is not just a necessity—it is a human right.

Food for All Oregonians would ensure that youth and elderly Oregonians, regardless of their immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep themselves and their families healthy. No one in Oregon should go hungry simply because of where they were born.

The Oregon Food Bank Network is comprised of 20 Regional Food Banks. Together we support over 1,200 partner agencies and food assistance sites, serving every corner of the state – rural, urban and suburban communities alike. Across this Network, we are seeing record-breaking levels of demand. Every single day families are making impossible choices—between food and rent, medication and meals. Today, one in six children in Oregon does not have enough to eat. And while hunger impacts every community, immigrant and refugee Oregonians face it at twice the rate of others, despite paying billions in annual taxes and contributing to Oregon's economy.

The people who harvest our food, care for our elders, and build our communities are often the ones going without. They are our neighbors, our coworkers, and the parents of children in our schools. They are an integral part of Oregon's future, yet they are denied access to basic grocery benefits simply because of immigration status.

Food for All Oregonians (SB 611) will change that. By extending food assistance to low-income youth and elders who are currently excluded from SNAP, this bill will ensure that fewer children go to bed hungry, fewer seniors skip meals, and more Oregonians can live with dignity. Food for All will build on successful, community-driven navigator models to ensure trust and community safety.

We know that when people have enough to eat, everyone benefits—kids do better in school, health outcomes improve, and local businesses thrive. This is true in every corner of Oregon - in rural, urban, and suburban communities alike. This is not just the right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do - when all of our neighbors are getting the food they need, Oregon thrives.

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Right now, Oregon lawmakers have the power to create lasting change and ensure that no child, no elder, and no family goes hungry in our beautiful state. I urge you to vote **YES** on SB 611—because a thriving Oregon starts with full plates and healthy communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

*Josephine Sze*

Josephine Sze  
Chair of the Oregon Food Bank Network  
Executive Director of Josephine County Food Bank

