



March 24, 2025

Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services  
**Re: Support for Senate Bill 611**

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

Welcome Home Coalition is a multicultural and intersectional alliance of over 80 nonprofit organizations and individuals in the Portland Metro Area that uses its collective resources to build a movement for housing justice. We believe that everyone deserves to have an affordable and safe home in a neighborhood of their choice. We advocate for policies that eliminate inequities in housing outcomes based on race and class. We are in **strong support of Senate Bill 611**, Food For All Oregonians which would ensure Youth and Elder Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy.

Food assistance is a homelessness prevention tool. A study of new SNAP participants found that after just 6 months of starting SNAP, households were more likely to become employed or keep their job. We cannot continue to address housing instability in isolation from food insecurity. Oregonians who are renters are six times more likely to experience hunger than Oregonians who are homeowners. **More than 50 percent of Oregonian renters lack sufficient residual income to pay for both rent AND basic necessities, such as food and medicine.** The financial assistance provided by SNAP not only mitigates housing costs but also improves the chances of achieving and maintaining economic stability.

Being food secure reduces one's risk of falling behind on housing payments and, subsequently, the risk of eviction or foreclosure. The material hardship that renters face is a leading cause of homelessness in Oregon. More than 86 percent of all eviction filings in Oregon are due to unaffordable rent, and for every \$100 increase in rent, there is a 9 percent increase in homelessness. By providing financial assistance to low-income Oregonians to purchase food, SNAP alleviates the financial strain associated with meeting basic needs and allows households to free up funds for other essential expenses, such as rent or mortgage payments.

We are grateful to legislative leaders like you, for your bipartisan support and immediate action to move forward with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Molly Hogan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Molly" and last name "Hogan" clearly distinguishable.

Molly Hogan  
Director, Welcome Home Coalition