

Submitter: Dawn Hayami
On Behalf Of: Sacred Organizing Coalition
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB611
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 Dawn Hayami, I live in Lake Oswego, and am a member of the Lake Oswego United Church of Christ and the Sacred Organizing Coalition. I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 611, Food For All Oregonians, which would ensure Oregon youth and elders, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them healthy.

For nearly 4 decades, I've volunteered with two non-profit organizations serving unhoused individuals and families. At the downtown hospitality center, guests of all ages rely on protein-rich sandwiches provided by the "tuna team", augmented by food donated by Elephant's Deli. At our transitional shelter for families, I've witnessed the determination with which the head of household seeks the food the family needs using any resource available — SNAP benefits, local food pantries, donated meals, and gleaning. Thousands of immigrant and refugee Oregonians are excluded from SNAP due to their immigration status. I cannot imagine how newcomers to Oregon can keep their families healthy without access to all benefits and means to obtain vital nutrition.

My entire career centered around the analysis of population health data to find ways to improve public health. I know that prevention is the least expensive and most effective approach to preserving health and life. Healthy food for children and youth will determine the health trajectory for the rest of their lives. One of the most common health problem experienced by our elders is protein-calorie malnutrition. Making it possible for elders to obtain the food they need to stay healthy will avoid visits to urgent care, ERs and hospitals. Oregon will benefit when all of our neighbors are getting the food they need!

This is why I am urging your YES vote on SB 611. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,
Dawn Hayami