

**To:** Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, Senate Committee on Human Services members  
**From:** Bridget Budbill, Legislative Advocate at the Oregon Law Center  
**Re:** Senate Bill 611 – Food for All Oregonians  
**Date:** March 25, 2025

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

The Oregon Law Center (OLC) is a legal aid organization providing free, civil legal services to low-income Oregonians. We are here in support of Senate Bill (SB) 611, Food for All Oregonians. SB 611, modeled after the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is a state-funded nutrition assistance program that will serve undocumented members of our communities ages 25 and younger and 55 and older. SB 611 will ensure fewer little kids, young people, and elders go without enough to eat while also boosting our economy through dollars spent at businesses big and small all across our state.

### **Oregon benefits mightily from the contributions of undocumented Oregonians**

Some of our clients are undocumented Oregonians who are not paid fairly, or sometimes not paid at all, for work they performed. Through these interactions and others, we see the contributions of our undocumented community members in the work force (and the taxes paid from their work), as well as in the unpaid caregiving space so others can work outside the home. Harder to quantify but no less meaningful are the contributions of our undocumented neighbors as part of mosaic community, be it through sharing recipes, music, art, language, stories, and more. Providing food assistance to undocumented young people and elders simply means more kids will grow up stronger and more ready to learn and fewer seniors will be malnourished, frail, and susceptible to irreparable injury and premature decline.<sup>1</sup>

### **Nutrition assistance programs' positive economic impacts are broad and swift**

There are 3,484 authorized SNAP retailers<sup>2</sup> in Oregon who, if SB 611 passed, may potentially also become FFAO retailers with access to more customers and revenue. These retailers range from

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023, updated July 21, 2024). *Child food insecurity in America*. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/child-food-insecurity> (citing Thomas, M. M. C., Miller, D. P., & Morrissey, T. W. (2019). Food Insecurity and Child Health. *Pediatrics*, 144(4), e20190397. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2019-0397>); Pooler, J. A., et. al. (2019). Food Insecurity: A Key Social Determinant of Health for Older Adults. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 67(3), 421–424. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.15736>; Na, M., et. al. (2023). Food Insufficiency, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Status, and 9-Year Trajectory of Cognitive Function in Older Adults: The Longitudinal National Health and Aging Trends Study, 2012–2020. *The Journal of Nutrition*, 153(1), 312–321. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tjn.2022.12.012>.

<sup>2</sup> SNAP Retailer Management Year End Summary FY 2023 | Food and Nutrition Service. (2023). <https://www.fns.usda.gov/data-research/data-visualization/snap-retailer-management-dashboard> (last accessed March 23, 2025).



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establishments big and small, chain and mom-and-pops alike, farmers' markets, produce businesses, and corner stores, among others, all across the state.<sup>3</sup>

Lastly, a question has persisted for at least 2,000 years, first in the Book of Luke, more recently, highlighted prominently by Mr. Rogers: what does it mean to be a good neighbor? There are certainly myriad ways to answer this enduring question. In our view, one answer is by supporting SB 611, which will ensure that more of our kids and elders aren't quite so hungry solely due to immigration status.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bridget Budbill

***The Oregon Law Center's mission is to achieve justice for low-income communities in Oregon by providing a full range of the highest quality civil legal services.***

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<sup>3</sup> *USDA SNAP Retailers* (2025), <https://usda-snap-retailers-usda-fns.hub.arcgis.com/datasets/8b260f9a10b0459aa441ad8588c2251c/explore?location=44.646293%2C-119.514496%2C6.00> (last accessed March 23, 2025).