

March 25, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services  
FROM: Andrea Gonzalez on behalf of Innovation Law Lab  
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

My name is Andrea Gonzalez and I am the Associate Director of Strategy at Innovation Law Lab. Innovation Law Lab is an organization that leverages technology, advocacy and law to advance immigrant and refugee justice. Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony in **strong 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.

Many immigrant and refugee Oregonians have faced unimaginable circumstances and are fleeing religious persecution or political violence. And yet, they have made Oregon their home and are contributing to Oregon's economy and workforce. Immigrant Oregonians are our friends, teachers, healthcare workers and neighbors.

Oregon right now is facing a hunger crisis, and 1 in 6 children in Oregon don't have enough to eat. Food pantries across the state are confronting record-breaking levels of demand. Oregon has farmworkers who are planting, growing, and harvesting the very foods that nourish all of us, and yet many cannot access these foods themselves or for their families. Despite paying *millions* 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 Innovation Law Lab, we see hundreds of immigrant Oregonians every year accessing immigration legal services, and we have seen first hand so many families being malnourished and unable to put food on the table. The immigration system is unfair and unjust and so often immigrant Oregonians have pending cases in immigration court for many years without being able to adjust their status – and yet, they are still contributing to our states' economy.

Access to food should not depend on where we were born. I urge you to envision an Oregon where anyone who needs food can access it and for your support in passing SB 611 so no Oregonian goes hungry.

Andrea Gonzalez  
Associate Director of Strategy, Innovation Law Lab