



# Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

DATE: March 25, 2025

TO: Senator Sara Gelser Blouin, Chair; Senator Diane Linthicum, Vice-Chair;  
and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Christina T. Nguyen, DO, MS  
On behalf of the Oregon Pediatric Society

SUBJECT: Support for SB 611 – Food for All Oregonians

My name is Dr. Christina Nguyen, and I am a pediatrician practicing in Oregon and a member of the Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS), the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 611, which aims to ensure access to nutritious food for all Oregonians, particularly those in marginalized and underserved communities. I speak not only as a healthcare provider but also as a first-generation immigrant who understands firsthand the barriers to food access and the vital importance of nutrition for the well-being of families.

As a pediatrician, I see daily the profound impact that a lack of access to food has on the physical, mental, and emotional health of children. I treat children who suffer from the long-term effects of poor nutrition, including developmental delays, chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes, and behavioral and emotional challenges. These children often come from families struggling to access healthy, affordable food, and this lack of access exacerbates existing health disparities. For many, the simple act of putting food on the table is a daily struggle, and the absence of a stable food supply puts children at a disadvantage before they even step foot in school.

Senate Bill 611 is a critical step toward reducing lack of food access in our state and addressing the root causes of unequal access to health. It would ensure that every Oregonian, regardless of income, immigration status, or background, has access to the healthy food they need to thrive. As a first-generation immigrant, I deeply understand the challenges that many families face when they are new to this country, including navigating systems of support and understanding their rights. Senate Bill 611's provision for inclusive food assistance programs will particularly benefit immigrant and refugee families who may be excluded from federal programs due to their immigration status.

Food is not just a basic necessity—it is the foundation of a healthy life. I have seen countless cases where children who lack proper nutrition fall behind in school, struggle with emotional regulation, and even face long-term health issues. By supporting this bill, we can break the cycle



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of poverty and gaps in healthcare that disproportionately affect children from low-income families, particularly immigrant families who may be excluded from federal aid.

As a physician, I have witnessed the resilience of families who, despite facing language barriers, financial struggles, and other hardships, work tirelessly to provide for their children. However, no matter how hard they work, when access to food is limited, their children's health and future are at risk. Senate Bill 611 addresses this need and recognizes the importance of providing all Oregonians with the means to nourish themselves and their families.

For our state to thrive, we must ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow up healthy and strong, with access to the food they need to succeed. Senate Bill 611 is a step in the right direction. OPS and I urge you to support this bill and help make Oregon a place where no one has to choose between feeding their family and other basic necessities.

Thank you for your consideration.