

Dear Oregon Lawmakers,

I'm a big sister and a caretaker in our family. I'm 19, and for the last five years I've been helping raise my four younger brothers in our apartment in Gresham, I lost my mom when I was just 14, while my dad works full time job. My dad is strong and proud, and he doesn't like to ask for help. We're immigrants, and I know that because of our status we can't get most benefits anyway. So I've learned to cook simple, cheap meals, and I watch my siblings to keep them safe and fed. Still, there are nights when even after dad's long day, all we have is a little rice and maybe some beans. I can tell my brothers are still hungry when they go to bed. I quietly skip meals sometimes so they can have a bit more.

But I refuse to believe this is how it has to be. I'm writing to you as a teenager who loves her family and is scared for our future. Hunger is a heavy weight on kids' shoulders. I see it in my brothers when they can't concentrate on their homework or they ask me why we don't have what other families do. Senate Bill 611 could change our lives. It would mean my dad could get some help buying groceries, and I could worry a little less about whether my brothers will eat tomorrow. Please, from an older sister who wants a better life for her siblings: make Food for All Oregonians a reality. Pass SB 611 so that youth like me don't have to bear this burden alone.