



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

I am writing on behalf of Basic Rights Oregon to urge you to support SB 611, which will ensure that all Oregonians have access to food regardless of one's legal status. As Oregon's LGBTQ2SIA+ advocacy organization, we recognize that queer Oregonians are in every community, including our immigrant communities. Basic Rights Oregon stands firmly behind our immigrant communities and believe in food access.

Immigrants face a plethora of barriers in this country, one of which includes access to food. Immigrants in Oregon do not have access to any federally funded social welfare programs. In 2022, undocumented immigrants paid 5.6 billion a year in state and local taxes yet are shut out of the very same programs they help fund. Additionally, if immigrants ever receive any kind of support from social welfare programs, they will never be able adjust their status. Nobody should be barred from receiving assistance.

Moreover, Oregon has food deserts all over the state. We see that low-income communities are the most affected by food deserts. In 2023, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that Oregon was facing more food insecurity than in 2020. We cannot improve this issue by completely opting out a large population that contributes to our economy and the communities that we all live in.

SB 611 would support our immigrant communities here in Oregon. At a time in which immigrant communities are under attack, it our duty to ensure we protect the most vulnerable among us. We need to pass SB 611 as a guiding principle of what we as a state need to do and it serves as an example of what should be done during these politically difficult times.

We hope you will vote YES to advance HB2800!

Thank you,

Jose Ramirez Reyes (he/him)  
Basic Rights Oregon