

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

My name is Edward Buck-Shannon and I am a policy associate at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO is an interfaith organization connected to more than 750 congregations across the state. We operate seven direct service programs including the Northeast Emergency Food Pantry, which is the largest pantry in the Oregon Food Banks Network. We also operate SOAR Immigration legal services where we provide legal assistance to non-citizen Oregonians. If SB 611 passes programs like SOAR would help transition people off of FFAO and onto federally funded food aid like SNAP.

EMO is 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.

Every week we handle more than 50,000 pounds of food and serve more than 1,000 households. Although food pantries are an important part of addressing food insecurity, they are far from the only solution. SNAP serves an equally important role in food security and financial stability. Whereas the pantry has limited hours and limited supply, SNAP provides the opportunity for a family to shop when, where, and how they choose.

Many of our clients are not eligible for SNAP because of their immigration status and many more live in mixed-status households. These are also often **intergenerational households** with multiple hard-working members **taking care of seniors and young children** who can't work. Senate Bill 611 will open so many doors for these families and individuals.

At Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon we are guided by the shared, universal values of our interfaith partners, **no one should go hungry for any reason, especially their immigration status.** EMO believes that *all* Oregonians deserve food security because when each Oregonian has the food they need, every Oregonian will live in a more just community.

Thank You,
Edward Buck-Shannon
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.