



Lisa Hebert
Executive Director

Montavilla Farmers Market
PO Box 16238
Portland, OR 97216
707.499.4766
director@montavillamarket.org

31 March 2025

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Robinson, Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Montavilla Farmers Market, I am writing to express **support for House Bill 5006**, Food For All Oregonians which would ensure all of our neighbors, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy.

Hunger was a crisis in our communities well before the pandemic, and the health and economic impacts of COVID-19 have fallen hardest on newly-arrived Oregonians. Immigrants, refugees and Compact of Free Association (COFA) community members, in particular, have long faced higher rates of hunger and poverty in Oregon. Just one example: Latinx and Pacific Islander Oregonians experienced hunger at twice the rate of white Oregonians pre-pandemic¹ – and this gap has only widened as our communities continue to struggle with COVID's ongoing impact and the rising cost of living.

Most farmers markets in Oregon, including Montavilla Farmers Market, accept and match EBT benefits to lower barriers to fresh, farm-direct food. Giving people access to EBT benefits gives them the opportunity to use our matching program which provides up to \$20 for fresh fruits and vegetables per week. This program should serve all of our neighbors regardless of their immigration status.

At Montavilla Farmers Market, we know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. HB 5006 will allow kids to do better in school, our families' health and well-being improves, and our economy thrives through the support of local businesses. This will be true in every corner of Oregon—in rural, urban, and suburban communities alike. When all of our neighbors are getting the food that they need, all of Oregon thrives.

This is why we urge your yes vote on HB 5006. Thank you for your time.

Lisa Hebert

Montavilla Farmers Market

¹https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_at_arrival_of_covid_2018-2020.pdf