

Tiffany Mitchell
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 32
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HB 3342 Testimony

Chair Monnes Anderson, Vice Chair Linthicum, and members of the committee, I write to you today to ask for your support of HB 3342, which would ensure that hospital patients, residents of long-term care facilities, and inmates of the Department of Corrections have the choice to access to wholesome, plant-based meals. Plant-based meals are essentially exactly what they sound like—meals and snacks made entirely from non-animal based products, with an emphasis on health outcomes. This means no meat, cheese, or dairy.

By increasing the consumption of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, while also significantly reducing saturated fat and cholesterol intake through the elimination of animal products, people who adhere to a plant-based diet are significantly less likely to develop cardiovascular diseases. In fact, some studies show that reduction can be as high as 40%. Adherents of healthy, plant-based diets have successfully helped manage and even reverse type-2 diabetes, and given themselves a better shot at living longer and avoiding chronic diseases like obesity and its associated issues.

I have personally seen the benefits of plant-based meals. My own father, a walking heart attack for most of my life, weighed over 300 pounds and was on two blood pressure medications and a statin for cholesterol. Three months after adopting a plant-based diet, he shocked his doctor because his blood work had fundamentally changed. In three months, he was off all those medications. A little over a year later, he had lost over 150 pounds. He has maintained his plant-based diet and health since 2011.

My father's success, and the success of many others like him, is at the crux of why this bill should pass. Some of our biggest cost drivers in the healthcare system are lifestyle choices

that bring people into the system to begin with. Nutrition is one of those factors, and this bill helps people to make healthier choices for themselves in terms of what they put into their bodies. For that reason, I ask for your support of HB 3342, so that we can open that door to better health for Oregonians in the most vulnerable of places.

Thank you,

Representative Mitchell