



February 23, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 610

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

On behalf of Tides of Change, I am writing to express **support for Senate Bill 610**, 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-pandemic — and this gap has only widened as our communities continue to struggle with COVID's ongoing impact and the rising cost of living.

Tides of Change is a non-profit agency in rural Tillamook, Oregon that serves survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking and human trafficking. Our agency serves a significant number of survivors who are Latinx, many of whom do not qualify for food assistance through Oregon Department of Human Services. There are so many reasons survivors stay in unsafe relationships, which often include a lack of resources. Adding food insecurity on top of all of the other needs' survivors have when fleeing from abuse is an unnecessary barrier to safety. Survivors should never have to choose between not being hungry and being safe.

At Tides of Change, we know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. SB 610 will allow kids to do better in school, our families' health, safety and well-being improves, 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 SB 610. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie Bundy", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Valerie Bundy, MA LPC NCC