

Submitter: Jenny Jiwirak

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services

Measure: SB610

Supporting SB610 is a must! Food benefits for all Oregonians will unravel each household's daily struggle, especially as a college student. Take for instance this scenario of having to pull an all-nighter. It is always essential to carry some money to buy food when pulling an all-nighter, because without food, it is difficult to progress with our studies. As a Micronesian student, one without food benefits, it was always a debate between having to carry some pocket money or using some of my stored-up bill money.

Fast forward to this year, I have two kids: one with food stamp and one without. One child's food benefit has certainly uplifted some of my financial strains, but it is not enough because I have other family members who live with me--ones who help watch my children while I go to work. The benefits always run out during the middle of the month and of course, since there is no other way, some of the time I would use up more than half of my paycheck just for food. Only if we all had access to food benefits, then I would not have to worry about skipping a month's bill or even gas on top of it all. All of which is sad to say that now I understand why some people would rather buy food that are long-lasting, cheaper, and unhealthy. For most people who make less, the percentage of household income spent on food will always exceed what economists depict as 'normal'. They say food expenditure should amount up 10-15% when in reality it is 60 to 75% of our income (specifically, the noncitizens).

I love Oregon and have lived here for 5 years and 1 month. However, the struggle of having to choose between paying bill or buying food is provocative. That's why most people move to Washington. I consider this my second home and I don't want to think about ever having to move because of food. Food benefits to all Oregonians regardless of citizenship is a necessity! As someone who's been paying taxes and will continue to do so in the long run, I am in support of SB610 wholeheartedly.

-student, La Grande, OR 97850