



Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

Advocating for Equity and Diversity throughout Oregon

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson, and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

For the record, I am Jackie Leung, co-chair with the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA). I am writing to you in support of SB 610 - Food for All Oregonians.

OCAPIA works for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal, and political equity for Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in the state of Oregon and to maintain a continuing assessment of issues and needs confronting Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in this state. OCAPIA has several statutory duties, all of which revolve around advocacy and equity.

In Oregon, 407,840 people are facing hunger, of which 114,460 are children.¹

We are not doing well. There is no question that Oregonians are experiencing hunger. According to Oregon Food Bank Network report, Oregon's food insecurity rate rose 21% between 2019 and 2020, seeing as many as 1.7 million people seeking food assistance from the Oregon Food Bank Network.²

SB 610 seeks to change this. The SB 610 Food for All Oregonians campaign envisions an Oregon where people, regardless of their citizen status, have access to food no matter where we are born. The bill will cover an estimated 62,000 individuals, including specific Asian and Pacific Islanders who are not eligible for SNAP benefits. The program mirrors federal SNAP benefits, to ensure that Lawful Permanent Residents, Citizens from the Compact of Free Association (COFA) citizens, and other Oregonians who are immigrants and refugees have access. In addition, the bill will fund a community navigation program that will improve outreach with culturally specific services and language specific support to connect families and individuals to much needed resources.

This bill includes the support of more than 50 organizations, with steering committee efforts led by Adelante Mujeres, APANO, The Latinx & Immigrant Family Wellness Hub (Centro Latino Americano, Downtown Languages, Huerto de la Familia), Micronesian Islander Community, Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon, Oregon Food Bank, and Unite Oregon.³

Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

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No one should go to bed hungry. As a state built on the backs of immigrant labor, we strongly urge you to pass SB 610.




Jackie Leung


Sources:

1. Feeding America: Hunger in America/Oregon. <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/oregon>
2. Oregon Food Bank Network Report. <https://www.oregon.gov/fooddrive/Documents/2022OregonFoodBankNetworkHungerFacts.pdf>
3. Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon. "Food for All Oregonians Backed by Over 75 Organizations." 2023, Jan 12. <https://oregonhunger.org/food-for-all-or/>



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