



Friends of Family Farmers ♦ PO Box 751 ♦ Junction City, OR 97448

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

On behalf of Friends of Family Farmers, 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-pandemic¹ — and this gap has only widened as our communities continue to struggle with COVID's ongoing impact and the rising cost of living.

We like to say farming is not optional. This is only true because the need for nutrient dense, wholesome and culturally familiar food will never end. In addition, all people in Oregon should have access to locally grown food like the vegetables, fruits, meat, eggs and more produced by our more than 1,600 farmer members. Access to SNAP opens the door to access to Double Up Food Bucks and other SNAP associated programs at farmers markets and farmstands across the state. This is a step to making local food more accessible to low income Oregonians and putting more money into local farmers pockets.

At Friends of Family Farmers 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 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 SB 610. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Alice Morrison, Co-director of Friends of Family Farmers

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https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/sites/liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/files/oregon_food_insecurity_rates_at_arival_of_covid_2018-2020.pdf