

March 18, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Ali King on behalf of Our Children Oregon's 2025 Children's Agenda

SUBJECT: Support for SB 611

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ali King and I am the Policy and Advocacy Director for Our Children Oregon (OCO), a statewide organization that champions equitable policies and opportunities for every child by leveraging data and research. The Children's Agenda, convened annually by OCO, brings together more than 135 organizations statewide to create a holistic legislative agenda dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Oregon's children, youth, and families. **SB 611**, Food For All Oregonians, is a **top priority** of the 2025 Children's Agenda and has **strong and broad support** from our partner organizations across Oregon.

I am submitting this testimony today from a personal lens. Throughout my career, I have worked with many state and federal legislators on issues impacting children and families. Now more than ever, it's crucial that we acknowledge our shared humanity and extend compassion and empathy to one another. **All** people deserve to eat. That shouldn't be a divisive issue.

Oregon is facing a hunger crisis, and it is getting worse. Today, **1 in 6 children** in Oregon don't have enough to eat. **1 in 6!**

As an advocate for children and families in Oregon, I have seen the impacts of Oregon's worsening hunger crisis on our children and state in many ways. Chronic hunger in childhood can have lasting effects on health and development as it affects children's physical, emotional, and cognitive development, potentially leading to lifelong issues. The state bears the burden of chronic hunger in children, both directly and indirectly, as the consequences extend beyond the immediate health and wellbeing of the children and affects social, economic, and healthcare systems.

When I was the Director of Constituent Services for Congressman Blumenauer, I saw the impacts of the hunger crisis firsthand, especially in the immigrant community. As part of my job, I assisted many immigrant and refugee families during their resettlement. Despite paying billions in annual taxes in Oregon, immigrant Oregonians are twice as likely to face hunger and poverty in our state and thousands of these Oregonians are excluded from vital food assistance due to their immigration status. **These barriers don't just harm immigrant families– they weaken Oregon's economy, destabilize communities, and strain critical systems.**

These neighbors, family members, coworkers, and friends contribute to our communities and Oregon's economy and help make Oregon a wonderful place to live. Access to food should not depend on where we were born.

I appreciate the work you do to support Oregon's children and families and I strongly urge you to help make Oregon a state where anyone who needs food can get it by voting **yes on SB 611**, Food For All Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Ali King

Ali King

Policy and Advocacy Director, Our Children Oregon

View the [2025 Children's Agenda](#)