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February 25th, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 611

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

My name is Carolyn Stein, I live in Eugene Oregon, and I am the Executive Director of FOOD For Lane County. I am writing in **strong support of Senate Bill 611**, Food For All Oregonians which would ensure Youth and Elderly Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, have access to the food they need to keep them and their families healthy.

Oregon is facing a hunger crisis, and it is getting worse. Today, **1 in 6 children in Oregon** don't have enough to eat, and **one-third more Oregonians** face hunger than before the COVID-19 pandemic. Food pantries in Lane County and across the state are confronting **record-breaking levels of demand**; with FOOD For Lane County seeing a 13% increase in pantry visits in the past year, and that need continues to grow.

Despite paying billions in annual taxes in Oregon, immigrant Oregonians are twice as likely to face hunger and poverty in our state. Thousands of immigrant and refugee Oregonians are excluded from vital food assistance due to their immigration status.

Food for All Oregonians (SB 611) will allow low-income Youth and Elderly Oregonians to access the grocery benefits they need to thrive. These are Youth and Elders who are currently excluded from SNAP solely due to immigration status. Food for All will build on successful, community driven navigator models to ensure trust and community safety.

We know that when we all have access to food, we're all better off. Kids do better in school, our families' health and well-being improves, and our economy thrives through the support of local businesses. This is 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 I am urging your YES vote on SB 611. Thank you for your time.

FOOD for Lane County is an equal opportunity provider and a member of

Sincerely,



Carolyn Stein, Executive Director
FOOD For Lane County
Eugene, OR