

## **Written Testimony for Ways and Means**

Co-Chair Tawna D. Sanchez, Co-Chair Kate Lieber and members of the Committee,

My name is Theresa Martinez, and I am the president of Eastern Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children (EOAEYC). As a professional organization of educators, we are very concerned about the lack of nutritious food available to young children and families in our frontier region and because of this, we support the Food For All Oregonians.

Early childhood is a critical time for development. The human brain develops 70% of capacity by the age of five. It is vital for children to have access to nutritious food during this time of their lives in order for optimal brain development and the ability to become functioning members of society.

During this time of uncertainty with access to federal funding for food programs, it is essential for the state of Oregon to invest in the basic human right of food for Oregonians who contribute to our economy and society in positive ways, and may not be eligible for what little food assistance there will be available to them.

EOAEYC urges you to support funding for Food For All Oregonians because we are all better as a state when everyone can have access to the food they need so kids can be successful in school and families are healthy and stable.

In appreciation,

Theresa Martinez