

February 27, 2019

Co-Chairs Wagner and Smith and Members of the Committee,

The Portland Business Alliance (Alliance) would like to express the value the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office (OACO) has in the collaborative work they have provided in helping immigrants and refugees find living wage jobs.

The Alliance and one of our affiliates, Partners In Diversity (PID), have partnered with the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs (OCAPIA), which sits under the OACO to further the research work PID completed in 2017 which provide solutions to move more people of color into living wage jobs.

This partnership has been integral in pulling together stakeholders from a cross sector of organizations to create solutions that can translate into meaningful policy work. The OACO worked with our office, OCAPIA, and its legislative members, providing the planning, staffing, and analysis of the stakeholder group of over 35 individuals representing HECC, licensing boards, PCC, business, settlement agencies, refugee and immigrant leaders, and the Governor's Office to hear the policy research report developed by the OCAPIA/Partners in Diversity/OACO, and identify the collaborative HUB for licensure needed to bring immigrants and refugees with advanced degrees into the Oregon workforce.

The staffing and analysis expertise of the OACO was essential to the outcome of the day and the overall work has informed two bills, SB 855 and SB 856, regarding re-credentialing for immigrants and refugees in the 2019 session. PID and the Portland Business Alliance are in support of both these bills and will be meeting with the Oregon Business Council, with our partners, OCAPIA, and OACO, regarding our support of the re-credentialing and workforce efforts we have taken on. We highly encourage the committee to keep the OACO in its current form and support.

Sincerely,



Andrew Hoan
President and CEO
Portland Business Alliance



Mari Watanabe
Executive Director
Partners In Diversity