

Oregon House of Representatives
House Committee on Business and Labor
Hearing on HB 2998
March 13, 2019

Honorable Chair Barker, Vice Chair Barreto, Vice Chair Bynum and Members of the House Committee,

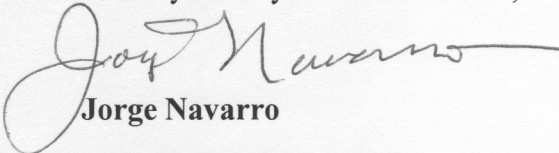
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2998.

House Bill 2988 removes the English language only requirement for documents related to business organizations that are submitting for filing to the Secretary of State. This requirement has created barriers and diminished opportunities for entrepreneurs with Limited-English-Proficiency.

I, Jorge Navarro, have been working with the Latinx community here in Oregon for over 45 years. As a volunteer at Fiesta Latina, Executive Director of Centro Latino Americano, and Program Manager of the Cambios Program for Huerto de la Familia, I had the privilege of assisting enthusiastic Latinx entrepreneurs in learning how to sell their products and services. I believed that we had an opportunity to benefit not only the Latinx community, but also the community at large. The English only guides and materials were clearly an impediment to understanding and participating in this Oregon economy. Removing this impediment would not only facilitate the inclusion of this vibrant economic force, it would also enrich the mainstream's understanding of the benefits of diversity. "Don't put all your eggs in one basket" Cervantes

Increased accessibility in the filing process will lead to the establishment of more small businesses in Oregon which signifies more tax revenue and employment. Based on estimates given to us by the Secretary of State Staff, the translation of filing forms could provide an addition of over 17,000 businesses per biennium. The Small Business Administration has found that the average minority owned business in Oregon hires seven employees. According to the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, in the state of Oregon, there are over 225,000 individuals with Limited English Proficiency, they all deserve access to entrepreneurship and financial opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration,



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