

**To:** House Committee on Revenue

**From:** Peggy Samolinski, Director, Youth and Family Services Division

**Date:** March 2, 2021

**RE:** Testimony on HB 2819

Chair Nathan son, Vice-Chairs Pham and Reschke, and Members of the House Committee on Revenue,

I am writing in support of HB 2819, the Leave No Worker Behind bill. The bill makes all workers eligible for Oregon's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) regardless of whether they have a social security number.

HB 2819 would greatly benefit income-eligible workers who currently file their taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) instead of a social security number. The majority of these individuals are people of color - predominantly Latino and Asian people.

In Multnomah County, we see that the EITC is an important tool in addressing poverty and supporting low and moderate income households to be stable. It has a focus on families with children, while including individuals as well. To support families to receive this credit, we invest County dollars to provide tax preparation support.

However, the Earned Income Tax Credit is not available to some of our most vulnerable community members. Currently, the EITC excludes workers who file their taxes with an ITIN. It also excludes families with mixed immigration status, as a family cannot receive the credit if one household member files with an ITIN.

Many of these workers are in essential roles within retail, food processing, and agriculture and construction fields - and deserve to be included in EITC, just like all other working tax payers. In addition, the significant racial disparities these workers face in health, economic and educational outcomes have been amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a significant racial equity and justice issue.

HB 2819 addresses this inequity by ending the exclusion of households with ITIN filers from Oregon's EITC, and giving an additional financial boost, by making up for what the federal credit denies ITIN filers.

We at Multnomah County support HB 2819 and ask that you take this important step to address this inequity in our revenue system and to promote racial equity in Oregon.