



LatinoNetwork

March 2, 2021

**Testimony of Leland Baxter-Neal, Director of Advocacy
Regarding HB 2819
House Committee on Revenue**

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Werner Reschke and members of the committee:

Latino Network appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2819: Leave No Worker Behind.

Latino Network is a culturally specific nonprofit serving Latinx youth and families in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties. Our organization provides transformative services to over 8,000 Latinx youth, families, and community members in multiple areas including education, family stability, housing support, and advocacy.

Immigrant Oregonians are an essential part of our state, contributing to our collective prosperity and forming a part of Oregon's diverse of community.

Throughout the now-year-long pandemic, immigrant Oregonians have been on the front line of keeping our state running as essential workers. Immigrant and BIPOC Oregonians have suffered disproportionately high rates of COVID infection while staffing critical jobs and industries vital to keeping Oregonians fed and cared for.

Immigrant Oregonians work and pay taxes like all Oregonians. Yet hundreds of thousands of Oregonians are excluded from the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

According to data presented to this committee by the Oregon Center for Public Policy, nearly a quarter of a million Oregonians because they or someone in their household files their taxes with an Individual Tax Identification Numbers (ITIN).

Latino Network strongly believes all workers, no matter our place of origin, should be able to earn enough to care for our families. And while we believe that all Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, should be treated fairly under our state laws, it's worth noting that this breathtakingly high number of excluded Oregonians includes United States citizens, legal permanent residents, and others who have lawful immigration status.

It is a fact of our economic system that some jobs simply pay too little for workers to make ends meet and support their families. The goal of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is to strengthen the economic stability of workers by raising their take-home pay,

helping their families pay for essentials. HB 2819 supports the wellbeing of our communities by allowing all income-eligible workers in Oregon to claim the state's EITC, regardless of how they file their taxes.

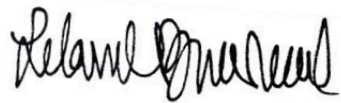
Our communities are disproportionately impacted by inequitable conditions that result in disparate opportunities based on an individual's legal status. Under current policy, the EITC is denied to everyone in a household if one member files their taxes with an ITIN.

Passing HB 2819 means that 90,000 U.S. citizens living in mixed-status households in Oregon will benefit from the EITC, most of whom are children.

Every day we hear stories from community members unable to make ends meet, a situation that has been exacerbated to the point of crisis over the past year. The EITC currently excludes certain workers, many deemed essential, across agriculture, food processing, retail, and construction sectors. These essential workers have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic due to racial inequities across the state. This includes 34,000 Oregon families—predominantly Latinx or Asian Americans—who file their taxes using an ITIN. We have an opportunity to protect the prosperity of our communities with HB 2819.

We strongly urge you to support HB 2819. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leland Baxter-Neal". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leland Baxter-Neal
Director of Advocacy
Latino Network