

Beth Poteet, MSW
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Portland, OR 97212

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Dear Chair Bynum and members of the committee,

I write to you today to urge you to pass HB 3265, The Sanctuary Promise Act. This piece of legislation will get us closer to a horizon in which all Oregonians feel their families are safe, secure and protected. As a person whose faith is rooted in the Christian tradition, I hold deeply in my heart that we are called to create a society that honors the dignity and worth of every person. This piece of legislation does that by expanding our decades-old Sanctuary law so that more people in my community feel safe from unfair harassment and profiling going to work, going to get groceries, or driving to their places of worship.

I have been committed to support the rights of my immigrant siblings ever since I began learning about the challenges faced by my friends from immigrant families in the rural Pacific Northwest farming community where I grew up. I've spent the past 20 years accompanying immigrants as they build their lives, contribute to their communities, face the stress and anxiety related to the looming threat of detention and deportation, and now as a public health professional, helping them navigate the devastating and disproportionate impacts of COVID19 on their communities.

You have an opportunity to make a tangible improvement in the lives of our neighbors by passing the Sanctuary Promise Act. Community reports and public records have shown that local law enforcement and other public resources are routinely used across the state to help federal immigration enforcement. This destroys trust in communities and tears apart Oregon families. The Sanctuary Promise Act protects Oregonians from racial profiling and ensures that local police and resources will not be used for federal immigration enforcement.

As a co-founder and leader in the Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIrJ), I am part of a network of people of faith and fierce love who have accompanied community members as they've navigated an immigration system that separates families and tears communities apart. While it can often be hard to see as we navigate language in a bill, this law is really about people and communities together ensuring that all Oregonians feel safer. I urge you to pass HB 3265.

Thank you for your work and attention,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Poteet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Beth Poteet, MSW