

Margot Lavoie
First Unitarian Church - Portland

Dear Chair Bynum and members of the committee,

I write to you today in support of HB 3265, The Sanctuary Promise Act. This piece of legislation will strengthen Oregon's existing Sanctuary Law and serve to further enhance safety, security and a sense of welcome for all Oregonians. I care deeply about this bill from both a personal and community perspective. As the daughter of an immigrant I know how important a warm welcome was to my mother. As an Oregonian I know how much richer our lives are thanks to the many wonderful contributions of our immigrant community. This bill provides many specific enhancements to existing Sanctuary Law that will help to ensure that all Oregonians feel more secure. For example, several years ago my home was burglarized and I did not hesitate to call law enforcement for assistance. Yet many of our undocumented immigrants who are victims of a crime may be very reluctant to report it for fear of local police sharing their country of origin with federal immigration enforcement agents. Likewise, those who witness a crime may be unwilling to come to a local or state courthouse to provide evidentiary testimony for fear of being detained while there by ICE. Passage of HB 3265 will help resolve both these terrible dilemmas - and thereby make all Oregonians safer.

As a member of the Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice (IMIJ), I am part of a network of people who have accompanied community members as they've navigated an immigration system that all too often separates families and tears communities apart. Now there is a chance to enhance our current Sanctuary Law, rebuild trust within our communities and make Oregon safer and more secure for everyone — I urge you to pass HB 3265.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Margot Lavoie