

**Kate Brown**  
Governor



**Oregon Commission for Women**  
“Advocating Equality and Diversity”  
421 SW Oak Street, Portland, OR 97204  
O: 503.302.9725  
E: [oaco.mail@oregon.gov](mailto:oaco.mail@oregon.gov)

House Committee on Rules  
Testimony in Support of HB 2337  
March 23, 2021

Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chair Drazan and Vice-Chair Paul Holvey, and Members Bonham, Fahey, Salinas, and Zika,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak before you, as it is a very humbling experience for me. For the record, I am Natasha Haunsperger, a Commissioner with the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW), and in my other role, I'm also a Police Officer with the Portland Police Bureau. I applied for an appointment to the OCFW because of its active commitment to public policy and its intersection with addressing comprehensive justice and human rights inequities and barriers women face and experience daily. I am aware that House Bill 2337 strongly aligns with the mission and vision of the OCFW.

For the last fifteen years, I have been serving and supporting my community as a police officer and responded to many incidents involving our immigrant and refugee families. As a result of the unfortunate set of crime-impacted factors, I know that these families were in dire need of immediate medical assistance, often including a long-term therapy, recovery, and medical aid.

I, too, often witnessed that many of our Limited English Proficiency community members face additional barriers to accessing medical services due to language and cultural barriers. These barriers lead to prolonged, systemic, and structural health care inequities, racial and gender disparities, and a class divide. As a police officer, when working with victims of crime such as domestic violence assault and human trafficking, I have to stress the importance of connecting victims with immediate resources and medical services that are culturally and linguistically specific.

This HB 2337 would allow the OACO to conduct necessary and vital research and comprehensive data collection and analysis, but foremost, this Bill would also allow for the development of the statewide infrastructure, policies, and practices that would ensure that the health care system implements meaningful language access policies.

As a Slavic immigrant myself, I have the privilege of working closely with Slavic community partner organization, particularly my dear Slavic Sisters at the Immigrant Refugee Community Organization Slavic and Eastern European Center, who today informed me about a critical issue that permeates within the Oregon Slavic immigrant families.

Esteemed Slavic physician, Tetyana Odarich, hoping to advocate for the needs of not only Slavic families but all of our families who are facing language, racial and ethnic barriers will be submitting a letter as well.

Sincerely,

Natasha Haunsperger