

Molly Dwyer  
First Unitarian Church member  
221 NE Morris St  
Portland, Oregon 97212

March 25, 2021

Dear Chair Bynum and members of the committee,

I write to you today to urge you to pass HB 3265, The Sanctuary Promise Act.

Fear of legal authorities due to immigration status and skin color is very real in the community in which I work as a school counselor. Families are sometimes reluctant to report acts of violence against themselves or their family members, reluctant to access resources to which they are entitled and reluctant to advocate for their children within the educational system if it means challenging or contradicting school staff. Children are afraid their parents will be picked up by ICE while they are on their way to work or to the grocery store. The impact on the well-being of these families and children is significant. Living in constant fear is traumatic and contradictory to learning and growing. A sense of safety is fundamental mental and physical health and wellness. For those of us who have the privilege and power to provide that sense of safety for others, it is our moral obligation to do so.

Although the legislation does not fix everything, it can provide an increased sense of safety and security for many people in our community, both citizens and undocumented community members alike. Some of these community members are the school's biggest supporters, volunteering in classrooms, organizing book fairs and providing home-cooked food for teachers during school conferences. They are assets to our community.

There are many pragmatic reasons that I could give and positive impacts for our state as a whole that I could argue would result from the passage of this bill. However, what it comes down to for me is simple: If we consider others in our community as our brothers and sisters, there would be no question about passing this bill. It simply honors the humanity of our community members.

I urge you to pass HB 3265.

Thank you for your work and attention,

Molly Dwyer