

# **OREGON TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**

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Testimony of Arthur Towers  
OTLA Political Director  
**In Support of House Bill 3265**  
Before the House Committee on Judiciary  
March 25, 2021

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Noble and Power, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3265.

OTLA members are lawyers who fight for the rights of underdogs. These include workers who face discrimination, harassment, or on-the-job injury; defrauded consumers; victims of sex abuse, elder abuse, and child abuse; and small business owners who can't get their insurance claims settled appropriately.

The common thread is that our clients need access to justice. HB 3265 literally addresses this crisis. Victims and witnesses who fear going to court are Oregonians who can be easily taken advantage of by predators in our society. Our members report that the fear created by veiled and not-so-veiled threats around immigration enforcement at the courthouse create a barrier to civil justice. The 7<sup>th</sup> Amendment right to a trial by jury is at risk if the parties involved cannot have their day in court.

The government has tools to enforce immigration laws. Enforcing those laws at the food pantry, the courthouse, the emergency room or other locations at which people are most vulnerable runs counter to who we are as Oregonians.

We urge the passage of HB 3265.