

3/30/2021

SUBJECT: Yes on HB 3230

President Bynum, Vice Presidents Noble and Power, and members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am a member of the community, a mother, a micro-entrepreneur, a student, and a volunteer. I am writing in support of HB 3230, Universal Legal Representation, which would provide immigrant Oregonians legal support during a difficult and traumatic process. Despite a new president and administration, Oregon's immigrants are still very vulnerable to deportation which is why we need accessible, culturally responsive, and community focused legal services.

Universal Legal Representation expands the Equity Corps pilot program funded by Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and the State of Oregon to create statewide infrastructure for immigration legal defense, such as deportations, and prepare for any major changes in immigration policy.

I have seen fear in our communities, even when we live in a Sanctuary state. I am not just talking about parents, but about fear in children's eyes. That is what worries me, among other things. It is those families that are being separated as we speak. When a family member is detained by ICE, many families do not have financial resources to pay for legal fees. We know that the right legal representation can make a big difference in a person's case! A community member without legal representation is 5.5 times more likely to be deported regardless of the merit of their case.

I am also here to ask for the safety of our families, the opportunity for all children to grow up without fear of being separated from their parents and to avoid fear, suffering and anxiety. Give us the opportunity to grow our families in peace and feel safe.

We must protect the rights of everyone who calls Oregon home and support their ability to thrive. By doing so, we can continue being a place that values families and communities.

Thank you,