



4/14/2021

Attn: Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield; Vice Co-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith; and members of Oregon's Joint Committee on Ways & Means

I am writing to you today in response to your calls for equity-based policies. As members of Oregon's Ways & Means Committee, I am calling on you to support HB 3230 (Universal Representation) and HB 2819 (Leave No Worker Behind). These bills are a priority in [The People's Budget](#).

HB 3230, 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. Here are some key facts on Universal Legal Representation:

- The program would create a statewide call center that would provide direct contacts and streamline access for those seeking help.
- Impacted communities would be able to choose their provider.
- Community based organizations that already have deep connections to the community would oversee the program's policy and fiscal decisions and have an active role in coordinating.
- The statewide representation team would embed lawyers, through fellowships, at CBOs to ensure community members could turn to the organizations they already know and trust in times of need.

Adelante Mujeres is also in support of HB 2819, Leave No Worker Behind. Every day we hear stories from community members unable to make ends meet. The EITC currently excludes certain workers, many deemed essential, across agriculture, food processing, retail, and construction sectors. These essential workers have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic due to racial inequities across the state. This includes 34,000 Oregon families—predominantly Latinx or Asian Americans—who file their taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). We have an opportunity to protect the prosperity of our communities with HB 2819.



I believe that Oregon's economic recovery should help those who were hurt most by COVID-19 and our corresponding recession: primarily Oregonians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, women; immigrants; and/or LGBTQ+. Investments that are rooted in racial, gender, and economic justice are what this moment calls for. Now is not the time for Oregon to save money or cut budgets.

By prioritizing the policies included in *The People's Budget*, you will build an equity-based budget that ensures Oregon emerges stronger than before and is ready to weather future storms. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to give feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Bridget Cooke'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bridget Cooke, Executive Director, Adelante Mujeres
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