

April 24, 2021

Co-Chairs Johnson, Hayward, and Rayfield, Vice-Chairs, Giror, Gomberg, Smith and members of Joint Committee on Ways and Means

For the record my name is Jaime Arredondo . I'm a proud immigrant from Mexico, and have lived in Salem, Oregon for 30 years.

I'm here to humbly ask you to support the ARPA funding proposals submitted by our collaborative Alianza Poder, to serve the needs and even more exciting create the social, economic, and cultural opportunities for the 75,000+ Latino, immigrant, and farmworker in Woodburn and NE Salem to fulfill our potential--our gift to Oregon.

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Alianza Poder is a 20 year old regional collaborative composed of 11 community-based sister organizations: Farmworker Housing Development Corporation, Causa, Mano a Mano Family Center, Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), PCUN, the Farmworker Service Center, Mujeres Luchadoras Progresistas, Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality, Evolve Property Management and Workforce Development, KTUP Radio Poder 98.3 FM--housed at the Capaces Leadership Institute.

Some of our larger community building achievements include the development of eight farmworker housing communities in 6 cities, 5 rural that housed over 1500 essential workers and families, a community radio station, Radio Poder, which reaches the entire Willamette Valley (10 counties, 27 municipalities) which is home for the majority of Latinos in Oregon, the development of a base of thousands of leaders fulfilling their civic duties, and helping lead the development and launch of the Oregon Worker Relief Fund, which has received over \$100M of public funding. But, perhaps our most significant achievement is that our organizations are now led by the children of those same communities that founded them. You see, we are primed for the present and the future.

The best is yet to come. So with that, I want to share a brief reflection of my 30 years living and working in these communities and our future—our gift to Oregon.

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Why did we come here Papa? Porque (Why)? Did we come because of the so called "American Dream,"—to have a job, a big house, a big car, to get an "education?" What you saw Papa. 'To succeed!—Said someone!  
Why did we come? —Said a young men aging in the movement). To be the backbone of this country—el obrero (the peasant)? To become the new political force and main economic driver? To be like them? ¿¡Quién soy yo! (Who am I!?)  
Do we have more to offer? Something that's in us that we need to unlock. Una semilla (a seed) that's been passed on to us. Something we can't touch or see but can feel burning inside us.  
Why did you come compatriot? Where are you going? What is your gift to El Norte?

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My dear members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, please help us fulfill our full potential--it's our gift to Oregon.

Thank you.

Jaime Arredondo  
Proud Salem community member