

Submitter: Pamela Allyn

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110  
Implementation

Measure: SB1543

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and members of the Senate Judiciary  
Committee,

My name is Pamela Allyn and I live in Medford, Oregon.

I am writing in support of SB 1543 which would provide immigrant Oregonians with legal support during deportation proceedings. 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.

Many people in removal proceedings have valid legal claims to remain in the country and continue to contribute to Oregon's communities, but have no way to articulate these claims without the assistance of counsel. This bill safeguards due process by allowing immigrant Oregonians to access the rights afforded to them under existing law.

Representation by an attorney is the single most outcome determinative factor in deportation proceedings. Representation by an attorney improves someone's chances of staying with their family by 457 percent.

SB 1543 further expands the successful 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.

Oregon is home to thousands of immigrants and refugees who live in urban and rural areas statewide, and are critical to the state's cultural and economic vitality. Immigrant Oregonians work in key Oregon industries, are essential workers, and own small businesses that contribute to the vibrancy of our communities.

As a Spanish interpreter and volunteer in various organizations I've come into contact with lots of Latinamerican immigrants. I've seen U.S. citizen children suffer when one of their parents, an immigrant, is deported. In one case I remember a mom was going to be deported for minor shoplifting (less than \$50); however, when her family raised money for an attorney, she was saved from deportation because the attorney was able to show that her deportation would cause undue hardship to her US citizen son, who was disabled and very dependent on his mother. She didn't know this was a

provision of the law until after seeing the attorney.

I've seen U.S. citizen mothers and children need help from food stamps or other social services which they did not need prior to a breadwinner's deportation.

I've seen people in detention give up and accept deportation because the conditions are so bad there, even though they had a potentially winnable case for immigration court.

Although it would cost money to provide lawyers for immigrants, it might save money in the end, when people who work and pay taxes win the right to stay here, and support their family. It will save money on detention costs, because one of the first things an attorney does is try to get their client released until their court date. This would improve the mental health and financial status of the detainee and their family, give the family time to plan in case deportation eventually happens, and save the government money otherwise spent on expensive incarceration.

In short, I support SB 1543 and I ask that you do so also.

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.

Pamela Allyn