



February 9, 2022

Oregon Senate
Salem, Oregon 97301
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Re: Support of SB 1543

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members Dembrow, Gelser Blouin, Heard, Linthicum, Manning Jr.:

Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW) is submitting this letter in support of SB 1543 which would provide immigrant Oregonians with legal support during deportation proceedings. Despite a new US 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.

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.

All Oregonians should be treated with dignity and respect regardless of where they were born. But Oregonians who are immigrants and refugees, especially immigrant Oregonians who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx, or people of color, have faced increased immigration enforcement that includes racial profiling, detention, family separation, and potential removal to countries where they have fled violence and persecution.

Even Oregonians protected by DACA and TPS are still vulnerable to these inequitable processes. This has disrupted our local communities and put Oregon's children at increased risk of poverty.

According to the Oregon Center for Public Policy, one in every 10 Oregon children live with a family member without legal status.

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!

Respectfully,



Christine Chin Ryan
President
Oregon NOW



Kim Critelli
Legislative Co-Chair
Oregon NOW



Nancy Cook
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