



Date: February 9th, 2022
From: Jasia Mosley/Oregon AFSCME Council 75
SUBJECT: Yes on SB 1543



My name is Jasia Mosley and I am writing on behalf of Oregon AFSCME Council 75. Oregon AFSCME represents roughly 27,000 workers across the state from corrections officers to nurses to county employees. Our members recognize how important culturally-responsive and accessible legal representation is and the impact it would have on marginalized communities and those who do not have access to representation. We understand the impact that having proper representation has and want to make sure that everyone is given the opportunity to be properly represented, especially in deportation proceedings.

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.

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. Oregon is home to thousands of immigrants and refugees who live in both cities and towns 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. We must treat all Oregonians with respect regardless of where they come from, we need to protect all of our communities and universal legal representation is a huge step in the right direction.

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. We at Oregon AFSCME Council 75 urge you to say **YES on SB 1543**.

Thank you.