

HB 3176 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Action Date: 04/03/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 9-1-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Andersen, Cramer, Hartman, Hieb, Nelson, Neron, Nguyen H, Reynolds, Scharf

Nays: 1 - Elmer

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/8, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes Welcome and Reception Program within Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) to provide immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers with access to short-term and long-term support services. Appropriates unspecified General Fund moneys to OIRA to implement program. Directs OIRA to contract and coordinate with organizations to provide support services. Requires that organizations be compensated according to the number of individuals served. Requires OIRA to coordinate with community-based organizations to provide legal services through state's universal representation program. Directs OIRA to begin providing services by March 31, 2024. Requires contracted organizations to report on outcomes to OIRA by June 30, 2025. Requires OIRA to report on program's implementation and status to interim legislative committees by September 1, 2025. Modifies duties of OIRA to require coordination and implementation of policy recommendations in collaboration with stakeholders and provision of outreach, education, and training to public and private entities on improving access to public services. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Recent arrival of refugees from Afghanistan
- Recent legislation expanding access to services for immigrants and refugees
- Demographic changes in workforce
- Eligible organizations that would deliver services
- Services provided by refugee resettlement agencies
- Legal representation services available to immigrants and refugees
- Potential access to federal funds
- Access to early learning and child care for immigrants and refugees
- Features of refugee welcome center and process of welcoming refugees

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) was established in 2021 by Senate Bill 778. Senate Bill 1550 (2022) transferred OIRA from the Office of the Governor to the Department of Human Services (DHS). OIRA is charged with advocating for the interests of immigrants and refugees, collecting and monitoring data on immigrant and refugee populations in Oregon, and advocating for and analyzing policy proposals that affect immigrants and refugees.

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Before OIRA was established, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 2508 in 2019 (codified as ORS 411.139), which directed DHS to award grants to certain organizations to provide various navigation and assistance services for refugees. More recently, the Legislative Assembly passed Senate Bill 1543 in 2022, which established a universal legal representation program to provide assistance with immigration matters.

House Bill 3176 A establishes the Welcome and Reception Program within OIRA to provide immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers with access to short-term and long-term support services and expands the responsibilities of OIRA to coordinate policy recommendations.