

Submitter: Yekaterina Kozachuk
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure: HB2933

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Yekaterina Kozachuk and I work as the Assistant Program Manager at Slavic Oregon Social Services. My organization serves and supports survivors of Intimate Partner Violence within Slavic and Eastern European community. I support this bill because the funding would not only change the life our clients and community, but also the staff who work at my program. Being one of, if not the only, Slavic and Eastern European culturally specific domestic and sexual violence program in the country, we receive calls from all across the country asking for support. Culturally, in our community domestic and sexual violence is a systemic issue that only in the last 30 years is starting to be named for what it is: gender violence. A majority of clients are refugees and immigrants that moved to the states, where they often, for the first time, have the support and resources to leave a life of violence for a life of freedom and healing. We have often had clients tell us that they can't believe a program like ours exists because, in their homeland, they have no support, thus the cycle of abuse keeps going. There's also something really special about having someone who not only understands your culture but also your language. As a community, we need to heal from the generational and systemic trauma of our origins, so having our program in the community creates a safe space to access healing, empowerment, and freedom. , the current war in Ukraine is something that has affected everyone part of our community including our own families and friends. As service providers, I can say that this year was difficult to show up for our clients because, in terms of the war, we are all going through it together. Not only our program and staff, but other Slavic culturally specific social service programs, not only in Oregon but across the states were feeling the deep pain of our people. It's not been an easy time for us. It's been a challenging year for all of us because of the war and the high need in our community, so all the support we've received has made things easier for us and for our staff.