

Submitter: Stephanie Kurzenhauser  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure: HB2933

To whom it may concern:

My name is Stephanie Kurzenhauser, and I am a social work intern at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. I work with Slavic victims and survivors of intimate partner/domestic violence and sexual assault in a culturally-specific program, Slavic Oregon Social Services.

Currently, we receive more referrals for services than we can provide. Clients and children, as victims of violence, critically need safe housing and a plethora of resources including behavioral/mental health support, food, medical care, and vocational guidance. Language barriers, endemic to culturally-specific populations, are a troubling barrier to accessing essential assistance. How, for example, can a victim speaking only Russian seek emergency housing and case management in an English only speaking shelter or program? Such facilities or providers are unable to execute provision of bilingual and bicultural services that are sorely needed. We, as advocates, are on the frontlines of this work, and we see every day how much victims and survivors are suffering and going without. HB 2933 would provide essential monies.

Intimate partner/domestic violence and sexual assault leave an unimaginable and horrifying trail of devastation in survivors' lives. In the absence of care and intervention, whole family systems and communities remain fractured. Victims and survivors desire equitable support, regardless of language and culture, and HB 2933 is needed in order to ensure that the needs and human rights of victims and survivors, and their families, are protected and honored. Please vote yes on HB 2933.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Kurzenhauser, MA  
MSW Intern