



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Testimony in Support of HB 2957**

February 22, 2023

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and members of the committee,

My name is Khanh Pham, State Representative for House District 46. I am proud to be a sponsor of HB 2957 Dreamers Belong Bill along with Representative Ricki Ruiz, because it aligns with my own commitment and that of our state to a welcoming Oregon that affirms the right to economic opportunity, safety, and security for all Oregonians.

HB 2957 would create a program in partnership with community organizations to provide financial assistance for the DACA renewal fee of \$495 and legal fees up to \$200, through funds allocated by the Department of Human Services. This fund would be available to the over 11,000 DACA recipients in Oregon who must reapply for this status every two years. I appreciate that Rep. Ruiz brought this bill back from the 2022 session, because in the year since we can only begin to understand the impact of yet another year of inaction and uncertainty for this community.

This bill will not solve the immigration crisis or change immigration policies at a fundamental level, but it will provide stability to community members who have lived in this country since they were small children and are eligible for DACA status, which stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. These Oregonians have grown up as our neighbors, gone to school with our kids in every county across the state, worked as the backbone of many local economies providing vital services and labor, and they rely on their DACA status to continue working and supporting not only their families but their hometown communities where they live and belong. These Oregonians are our neighbors and our friends and they deserve our support.

As the daughter of immigrants who came to the US as Vietnamese refugees, I know firsthand the challenges of relocation and the power of welcoming community. Not every immigrant who flees violence, war, economic collapse, climate disasters, and other crises to make a home in the US is welcomed when they arrive or given the opportunity to obtain legal status. Oregonians who are DACA recipients know the hard choices their families made to keep them safe and secure. We can and should remove the barriers of additional renewal and legal fees to support continued residence and status requirements that allow these Oregonians to keep their families, and our communities, safe, secure, and whole.

I urge your support for HB 2957. Thank you!