

March 9, 2023

Representative Lisa Reynolds, Chair
House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3176

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

We are writing in support of HB 3176 which would establish a Welcome and Reception Program for immigrants and refugees and formally expand the role of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) to convene stakeholder representatives and state agencies to coordinate and implement policy recommendations.

We at Multnomah County believe that all human beings deserve to live in safety, foster their wellbeing, and reach their full potential. Newly arrived individuals and families are among the most vulnerable and underserved populations in our community. Currently, many of these new arrivals are left without the basic services they need to resettle, become stable, and participate in our community fully - this comes with both a significant human cost, but also with an economic and cultural cost to our state.

HB 3176 enhances services and responsive policy that will benefit both new and established immigrant and refugee Oregonians by:

- Directing the Department of Human Services, in consultation with OIRA, to establish the Welcome and Reception Program for the purpose of providing immigrants and refugees:
 - (a) Short-term wraparound support services, including shelter, food, clothing, health care, legal services, and transportation.
 - (b) Long-term support services related to integration, education, employment, and leadership development.
- Adding a role for the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement to convene representatives from state agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders to coordinate and implement policy recommendations in service of immigrant and refugee communities.

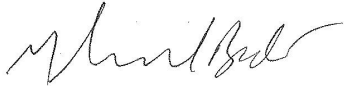
A state-funded Welcome and Reception Program and the expansion of OIRA's role are important steps toward equity and toward building an infrastructure in Oregon to support newly arrived members of our community.

This bill invests in Oregon's leadership and legacy of legislation to support safety and justice for immigrant and refugee members of our community. It engages with community-based

organizations to draw on their expertise and trusted community connections. It increases the coordination and implementation of policies benefiting immigrants and refugees and strengthens the voice of these communities in matters that affect them.

We at Multnomah County support HB 3176 and its efforts to equitably serve these important and vulnerable members of our community.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mohammad Bader". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Mohammad Bader, MS,LPC
Director
Department of County Human Services