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House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

Testimony in support of 3176

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Chair Reynolds, Vice-chairs Nguyen and Scharf,

On behalf of the Oregon Law Center, please accept this testimony on HB 3176 which establishes the Welcome and Reception Program for immigrants and refugees arriving to Oregon.

The Oregon Law Center (OLC) is a state-wide non-profit law firm whose mission is to achieve justice for low-income communities of Oregon by providing a full range of the highest quality civil legal services. Many of our clients have incomes at or below the federal poverty level, and work hard to provide the necessities for themselves and their family. OLC is committed to efforts designed to remove systemic barriers to safety, stability, and security for our client communities.

Over the years, Oregon has taken significant strides in passing policies that positively impact the wellbeing of our immigrant and refugee communities, from the sanctuary promise act, to driver licenses for all, and many more. When one community thrives, this inevitability contributes to the well-being and prosperity of all our communities. HB 3176, in the same spirit, creates a more welcoming Oregon by creating the Welcome and Reception Program.

The Welcome and Reception Program will provide some critical short wraparound support services such as shelter, food, healthcare, and legal services, and would allocate funding to nonprofit organizations in this state to provide these services. Furthermore, this program would also provide long term support services related to integration, education, employment, and leadership development.

We thank Sen Jama and sponsors of this bill for bringing this vital proposal forward. We thank this committee for your time and attention on this important matter and we urge your support for HB 3176.