



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736
oregonmetro.gov

Councilor Duncan Hwang, District 6

3/3/2025

House Committee on Rules

Re: Support for HCR 17 - Recognizing and honoring Cambodian Americans in Oregon and the United States and all those lost in the Cambodian Genocide

To Chair Bowman, Co-Chairs Drazen, Pham, and members of the Housing Committee on Rules –

Thank you for your consideration of supporting HCR 17 in recognition of the thousands of Cambodian American community members in Oregon many of whom faced immense adversity as refugees and have built prosperous lives and positive contributions to communities across our State. I have the privilege of representing one of the most diverse communities in Greater Portland as a Metro Councilor. Inner SE Portland is home to a vibrant AAPI enclave with a rich mixture of cultures represented through the small businesses, restaurants, markets, and community gathering places that surround the area. Many in the Cambodian American community reside in neighborhoods along 82nd avenue in addition to communities across greater Portland and SW Washington.

Cambodian Americans have settled in our state for close to 50 years with stories of sorrow and survival from a shared dark history of war and atrocities implicated by the Khmer Rouge. The resolve of Cambodian Americans to this day is to remember and celebrate their rich cultural traditions passed down from each generation and shared with the greater community. This motivation shown through the local advocacy and immigrant and refugee support structures that exist here locally.

Local organizations like the Immigrant Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) founded in the mid-seventies by a small group of Southeast Asian refugees in Portland remain active and robust to this day supporting hundreds of immigrants and refugee community members adjust to their new lives in Oregon. And Cambodian American Community of Oregon (CACO) is a thriving organization led by an inter-generational group of volunteers with a mission to preserve shared histories and culture while advocating for opportunities for community empowerment.

The legislature has a long practice of introducing bills that honor the accomplishments and contributions of individuals and communities. HCR 17 carries this tradition by recognizing the strength, perseverance and commitment to community shown by the Cambodian American Community in Oregon. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Duncan Hwang
Metro Councilor, District 6