



Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Portland: Neighbors Welcome is a pro-housing, pro-tenant organization. We advocate for bills that promote housing abundance, protect renters and build healthy and sustainable communities. Our member-led organization fights to build an Oregon that is affordable and accessible to all.

We are writing in strong support of SB 599, to ensure that all Oregonians have access to fair housing, regardless of their immigration or citizenship status. As our state works to reduce barriers to building housing, we must also be focused on eliminating roadblocks that prevent or slow people from moving into new or existing housing. Preventing inquiry about immigration or citizenship status on housing applications is eliminating one of these roadblocks.

Disallowing discrimination against someone based on their immigration status is also in line with our state's values of promoting inclusivity and protecting vulnerable populations. This bill embodies those values wholeheartedly.

While most housing providers already adhere to best practices and do not discriminate on the basis of citizenship or immigration status, passage of the bill ensures that these principles are codified in our state statutes and sends a protective and inclusive message to our communities. Additionally, Portland has a similar law already in effect, and this bill builds on that provision. Extending this provision statewide ensures protection for all communities in Oregon.

Especially as thousands of our neighbors sleep on our streets, every barrier we can lift to secure housing for all is a step in the right direction. This small but vitally important bill is deeply in line with Portland: Neighbors Welcome values and mission.

For all of these reasons, we urge your strong support of this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Portland: Neighbors Welcome