

Testimony in Support of SB 599 – Fair Housing for All Oregonians

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

I urge you to support SB 599, a crucial step toward ensuring that all Oregonians, regardless of their immigration status, have fair and equal access to housing. Oregon thrives because of the contributions of its diverse residents, including those who are undocumented or part of mixed-status families. Many of these individuals pay taxes, support local economies, and statistically commit fewer crimes than native-born citizens, further demonstrating their strong commitment to being responsible members of our communities. Yet, without the protections offered by SB 599, many hardworking individuals and families are unfairly denied stable housing, despite their proven reliability as tenants.

The consequences of housing discrimination based on immigration status are far-reaching, particularly in Oregon's larger metropolitan areas like Portland, where the homelessness crisis remains a persistent challenge. When landlords arbitrarily deny housing to individuals based on their immigration status, they risk pushing more people into homelessness, increasing the strain on state and local resources. This exacerbates the financial burden on all Oregonians, documented and undocumented alike, by requiring additional spending on emergency shelters, healthcare, and social services. Moreover, without this bill, landlords could justify denying housing to individuals on legal pathways such as visa holders or those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under the guise of them not being long-term renters, which would contribute to the continued destabilization of our communities. Oregon has made great strides in addressing housing insecurity, but without SB 599, we leave a significant gap in our fair housing protections.

I urge you to stand for fairness, economic stability, and the well-being of all Oregonians by passing SB 599. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Krishna A. Anand

