



March 6, 2025

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 599

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon). The ACLU of Oregon is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 43,000 members and donor supporters statewide.

We strongly support Senate Bill 599, which would prohibit housing discrimination based on immigration status.

Equal access to housing is a fundamental civil liberty and basic human right guaranteed by our laws. We must ensure that our housing protections prohibit landlords from depriving Oregonians of housing based on their immigration or citizenship status.

Discriminatory practices in housing impact who has access to quality education, healthcare, food, and transportation services. **Access to fair housing is critical to addressing systemic inequality in Oregon**, and we must not leave anyone behind when it comes to our fair housing laws. This includes members of our immigrant and refugee communities, who are facing significant **repression from the federal government** as well as harassment and social marginalization. These **forces create barriers to securing and maintaining stable housing**; barriers that are compounded by the current law, which allows landlords to screen out certain applicants or target certain tenants based on their immigration or citizenship status.

Senate Bill 599 would address this problem by amending Oregon's Landlord-Tenant Act to:

- **Stop** unnecessary, invasive inquiries into a prospective tenant's immigration or citizenship status.
- **Prohibit** discrimination against a tenant or applicant based on their immigration or citizenship status.

Senate Bill 599 is modeled after a provision in a local ordinance in the City of Portland and would extend that protection statewide, ensuring that no Oregonian is deprived of housing based on their immigration or citizenship status. Currently, four other states—New York, Washington, California, and Illinois— have similar protections in place.

Fair access to housing is vital for Oregonians to foster thriving and growing communities. It is time to ensure equal access to housing for all Oregonians. **The ACLU of Oregon urges your support for Senate Bill 599.**

Respectfully,

Yvonne Garcia
Deputy Director

For more questions, please email Jessica Maravilla, Policy Director at jmaravilla@aclu-or.org