

3/7/2025

Testimony in support of SB 599  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

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

My name is Sam Guthman, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of APANO Communities United Fund and APANO Action Fund in strong support of Senate Bill 599. APANO is committed to racial, economic, and social justice, and this bill represents a crucial step in protecting immigrant and refugee communities from discrimination in housing.

Housing is a human right. Yet, many immigrants and refugees in Oregon face barriers to stable housing due to unfair and discriminatory practices. SB 599 would ensure that no landlord can inquire about or disclose a tenant's immigration status, preventing discrimination that disproportionately harms our communities.

### Why SB 599 Matters for AANHPI and Immigrant Communities

- Prevents Housing Insecurity: Many immigrant families already face challenges securing safe, affordable housing. SB 599 ensures they are not further marginalized due to their immigration status.
- Eliminates Fear-Based Discrimination: Fear of deportation or exposure should never be a barrier to stable housing. This bill protects tenants from unnecessary and invasive questions regarding their status.
- Fosters Inclusive Communities: By ensuring that housing policies are fair and just, SB 599 strengthens Oregon's commitment to being a welcoming and equitable state for all.
- Supports Economic Stability: Secure housing allows immigrant families to work, educate their children, and contribute meaningfully to their communities without the fear of eviction or discrimination.

SB 599 is not just a moral imperative—it is also beneficial to Oregon's economy. **Immigrant communities are OUR communities.** They play a vital role in our workforce, contributing to industries such as healthcare, agriculture, technology, and small business entrepreneurship.

Ensuring that immigrant families have access to stable housing supports workforce retention, reduces turnover costs for employers, and strengthens local economies. When families are securely housed, they can fully participate in the workforce, invest in their communities, and contribute to the overall economic growth of Oregon.

Oregon has an ever-growing immigrant population, and ensuring housing protections for all residents benefits the entire state. By passing SB 599, we can prevent unjust evictions, reduce housing instability, and create a fairer housing market for all renters.

APANO urges the committee to support SB 599 and protect the rights of immigrants and refugees in Oregon. Stable housing is foundational to thriving communities, and this bill will help ensure that all Oregonians—regardless of immigration status—have a fair chance at securing a home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sam Guthman  
Policy Manger  
APANO CUF