

Please support SB 703!

It supports the rule of law and our immigrant neighbors.

This bill is not perfect--I would prefer to see legal and other services provided directly, without being routed through (often religious) nonprofits. I would prefer to see a less narrow definition of "noncitizen" covered--not just those with DACA eligibility/status or those from Iraq and Afghanistan with USDHS special immigrant status: others may also be eligible for documentation or citizenship, and morally deserving; but these are certainly the categories of immigrants to whom we have the clearest obligation--those brought here as children or who have supported and been displaced by US military actions.

Despite its limits, on balance, SB 703 is a way to provide needed services in the interest of justice and the rule of law.

Those who are navigating the legal system that will provide them with legal documentation or citizenship often need support in this complex and lengthy process. We cannot determine someone's eligibility nor change their status without an appropriate and considered process.

I notice that, ironically, many of those registering opposition do not seem to understand that their own ill-informed opposition to "illegal" immigrants means those opponents are, in effect, opposing the very legal system that this bill will help noncitizens to comply with. Please do not succumb to the mistaken ideas held by panicked Oregonians.

It is true that our state resources are stretched, but the federal government is not coming to help us on this--indeed, the federal government seems at this point more likely to unfairly deport workers on whom Oregon depends--for healthcare, agricultural work, and other services--than to help them obtain documentation or citizenship for which they may be eligible.

This bill also exercises fiscal restraint by limiting the amount ultimately spent on these services through this measure. Ultimately, I believe that we will have to raise taxes on the wealthiest people and businesses in the state, in order to provide for a more equitable and thus safer state. Until then, this measure balances our needs for a fair legal system and the cost burden of maintaining that system.