

March 19, 2025

Yes to SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship

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

My name is Nacia Castañeda, I live in Washington County and I support SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship. This bill came before you as HB 4085 in 2024, and passed this Committee unanimously. HB 2788/SB 703 is a bill that will save and strengthen families, improve outcomes in other DHS programs, bolster our workforce and strengthen Oregon's general fund.

Oregonians identified to receive immigration legal assistance include:

- Dreamers
- Those Who Served as Interpreters for U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Those Eligible Under Federal Law to Change Status or Obtain Lawful Permanent Resident Status
- Citizenship Applicants

285,700 immigrant Oregonians are workers in Oregon's labor force. Including 64% of those in crop production and thousands of them are currently eligible under federal law for an immigration status. That is thousands of Oregonians who, but for a few hundred dollars, are living in fear, out of mainstream employment and unable to support their families.

120,000 of Oregon immigrants are eligible for naturalization. This bill's one-time support of Oregonians to offset these legal costs will stabilize our workforce.

Thank you for your time and for standing with all Oregonians by giving back their dignity and respect as a human being.

Blessings,

Nacia Castañeda