

Chair Prozanski Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee

My Name is Maria Jose Solis, and I am an academic advisor at Oregon State University and a constituent in Linn County.

I enthusiastically 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.

Up to 1/3 of Oregonians without an immigration status are actually 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 the employment mainstream, unable to support their families.

Immigrant and refugee communities make up more than 13% of our state's workforce, yet legal costs prevent many Oregonians from obtaining a more secure immigration status. This bill's one-time support of Oregonians to offset these legal costs will stabilize our workforce.

As a DACA holder myself and someone who has lived in Oregon for the last 27 years I fully support the bill as it can alleviate so much uncertainty the country currently has. It is known that immigrants contribute to this country and state let us keep strengthening and contributing with protection.

Thank you for your time and for standing with all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Maria Jose Solis