

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I support SB 149.

I want to welcome recently arrived immigrant and refugee families to Oregon, and provide needed services to our new neighbors.

I hope people already living in this land welcomed my Grandfather Joseph Berger who came from Vienna, Austria at age 21 to visit his brother who had emigrated to St Louis, Missouri, and he liked it so much that he didn't go home. He sold lace door-to-door while studying English. I hope people already living in the USA welcomed my Great Great Grandfather Fabisch Philipp Kalish who left Poland and later came here with his British wife. I hope people already living in this land welcomed my Great Grandfather David Pereira whose parents came here from Holland with eight children many years before other relatives were killed by the Nazis in Holland during WWII.

And by the way, unless our ancestors were Native American, US citizens are all the descendants either of immigrants who chose to come or of enslaved individuals who were forced to do so. I think both circumstances are a good reason for now welcoming our current new immigrants and helping them out to live productive, peaceful, and happy lives in Oregon, whether they came to escape great dangers in their previous country or were unable to have productive lives there for themselves and their families.

So I am in support of SB 149 and amendments that will provide timely coordinated access to stabilizing support services for new Oregonians, so they can contribute to our workforce, our economy, and our communities, and become our neighbors. I am proud to live in Oregon, a state that welcomes immigrants and refugees.