

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

My name Khrystyna Porseva and I am case manager with Extended case management program of Lutheran Community Services NW, Portland Oregon.

I am writing to advocate for the passage of SB 194, the “Oregon’s New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act”, because I believe that every newcomer to our state deserves a fair and dignified chance to rebuild their lives and without a clear path to services, families are left struggling to meet basic needs like housing, healthcare, and employment.

At Lutheran Community Services, we are proud to support immigrants and refugees as they build new lives and find hope in a new country. We guide them through the systems, laws, and traditions of the United States, helping them navigate the many challenges that come with resettlement.

The main goal of our Extended case management team is to empower our clients to become self-sufficient and successfully integrate into their new communities. Many of the individuals and families we serve need support on this journey, and we are honored to walk alongside them every step of the way.

This bill will do exactly what it says - create coordinated access to the stabilizing support services for new Oregonians. When a new immigrant community member arrives, they will be able to find the emergency support that they need in a timely way, so they can shelter and house their families, enroll in school and healthcare services, and begin a new life contributing to their community.

SB 149 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other community members who are eligible, which will enable resettlement agencies and other CBO’s to provide additional assistance to families who may need a little extra support when they time out of traditional resettlement services.

- By supporting newly arrived immigrant Oregonian families, refugee Oregonians, and having additional case management and stabilization available for those who need it, SB 149 will both coordinate with and alleviate pressure on the mainstream housing and emergency shelter system in Oregon.
- The Oregon’s New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act is the result of refugee resettlement agencies, immigrant-serving CBOs, and government agency collaboration working together to ensure that we continue to welcome new neighbors well. It reflects the **shared need** for coordinated access to existing systems of support for new Oregonians

- SB 149 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other eligible community members. This expansion allows resettlement agencies and community-based organizations to offer continued support to families who may need additional assistance after their traditional resettlement services end.
- SB 149 will create infrastructure for a coordinated system of reception. It will provide the resources needed for Oregonians who have arrived seeking safety and protection to find housing, health care, employment, and education opportunities. This ensures our new neighbors can achieve their own goals of successfully contributing to our state
- **We have shown that we can work together to ensure that ALL communities thrive.** This bill was created with the commitment to the thriving of all communities. We are unwilling to pit the needs of one new Oregonian community against each other or other communities.
- Immigrants contributions to our economy, our schools, our churches, our communities are immeasurable

As a case manager in the Extended Case Management program, I've had the privilege of helping refugees, parolees, and immigrants adjust to their new lives in the United States. Many arrive with hope, but also face real challenges—finding housing, understanding a new culture, and accessing essential services.

Through Extended Case Management, I support my clients by helping them secure stable housing and serving as a bridge between them and their landlords. I offer cultural orientation and skill-building sessions to empower them with the knowledge and confidence they need to thrive independently. I also connect them with community resources that help bring greater stability to their lives.

Each step of the way, I see the resilience and strength in the people I serve. I'm proud to be part of their journey and to serve a community that continues to inspire me every day.

People move - and like any new neighbor, a little bit of support and welcome goes a long way for our refugee and immigrant neighbors. This bill is an opportunity for Oregon to choose to invest in welcoming its newest neighbors well. In a time of great uncertainty for this community, your vote for the Oregon New Neighbors Coordinated Access Program will mean that a new generation of Oregonians feels safer and welcomed in our beautiful state.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration,

Khrystyna Porseva,
Lutheran Community Services NW case manager