

Submitter: Michelle Chang
On Behalf Of: Salem For Refugees
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB149

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

I am writing to advocate for the passage of SB 149, the "Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act", because I have gotten to know some of our resettled families as a volunteer ESL tutor with Lutheran Community Services in Portland as well as Salem For Refugees in Salem. Every one of them has inspired me with their character, resilience, and dedication to a new, better life.

SB 149 will help new immigrant community members 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, ensuring our new neighbors can achieve their own goals of successfully contributing to our state. This bill will also enable resettlement agencies to provide additional assistance to families who may need a little extra support when they time out of traditional resettlement services.

Another much-needed benefit is that SB 149 will both coordinate with and alleviate pressure on the mainstream housing and emergency shelter system in Oregon.

In a time of great uncertainty for this community, lets help a new generation of Oregonians feels safer and welcomed in our beautiful state.

Thank you,

Michelle Chang