

Submitter: Sandra Dianne Litherland  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB149

Dear Committee;

I am writing to advocate for the passage of SB 149, the "Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act". I immigrated to the United States in 1968 and know firsthand how lonely, how frightening the transition can be. I came to the States from Canada. I thought it would be a simple move because we speak the same language (no, we really do not, there are many differences), the culture is the same (no, it is not, many things that are normal in Canada are considered 'weird' in this country). Also, with no friends or family it is difficult to navigate the school system, health care and simple day-to-day things like how to get things like a driver's license. SB 149 will create coordinated access to 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, access healthcare services, and begin a new life contributing to their community.

Statistics have shown that any move is high on the stress scale, but a move to another country is especially stressful. This anxiety provoking move can result in depression that could easily be alleviated by a helping hand. Just knowing that someone is welcomed in their new community as shown by a friendly assist can prevent the depression that often results in other costly health care problems. At this time many are feeling great anxiety and fears; your vote for the Oregon New Neighbors Coordinated Access Program will mean that a new generation of Oregonians may feel safer and comfortable in their new home in Oregon.

Thank you for your support, your time and your consideration of this important issue.

Yours truly,

Dianne Litherland