

Submitter:

Karen McCowan

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB149

April 8, 2025

Dear Senators:

My name is Karen McCowan and I live in Springfield. I have been a volunteer advocate

for refugees through the Refugee and Immigrant Resettlement Program (RISP) of Lane

County.

I write to urge your support of Senate Bill 149, which would extend eligibility for crucial

state-funded case support to Oregon residents who are immigrants but do not meet federal guidelines for parolee or asylum seeker status.

I have worked closely with three different Afghan refugees in the past three years.

They

are all hardworking, resourceful and resilient men who have much to offer the rest of us.

This law would also allow funding for more agencies

—

including RISP

—

to work with

our new neighbors in finding housing, education and jobs during a vulnerable time in their lives.

In a time of hostility to immigrants at the federal level, this bill is an opportunity to make

Oregon a more welcoming place for all.

I ask this as a Christian compelled to “welcome the stranger” by both the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible) and the words of Jesus in The New Testament.

Thank you!

Karen McCowan

948 Riverstone Lane

Springfield, OR. 97477