

Submitter: Janet Wright

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB149

My name is Janet Wright and I am an active member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Eugene. I am writing to advocate for the passage of SB 194, the "Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act", because it is vital to help newly arrived refugees and immigrants to receive timely and comprehensive services so that they can quickly become settled and can begin contributing to the vibrant fabric of our community.

SB 149 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other eligible community members and thus, creates coordinated access to stabilizing support services for new Oregonians. When a new immigrant community member arrives, they will be able to: a.) find needed emergency support in a timely manner; b.) find shelter for their families; c.) enroll in school and healthcare services; and d.) begin a new life so that they can contribute to their community. SB 149 will also enable resettlement agencies and other Community-Based Organizations (CBO's) to provide additional assistance to families who may need a little extra support when they time out of traditional resettlement services.

The Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act is the result of a strong collaboration of refugee resettlement agencies, immigrant-serving CBOs, and government agencies to ensure that we continue to welcome new neighbors in a manner that leads to their long-term success. SB 149 will also coordinate with and alleviate pressure on the mainstream housing and emergency shelter system in Oregon through the provision of additional case management and stabilization.

Immigrants make valuable contributions to our economy, our schools, our churches, our communities. I have immigrants in my own family who have created businesses to promote arts in the Eugene-Springfield area, as well as, are employed as valued health professionals who provide care to our community residents.

I am proud to be an Oregonian, to be a resident of a state that understands that new immigrant and refugee residents need a little bit of support to welcome them to their new home. All Oregonians reap the benefits of the energy and talents of our newest neighbors. Your vote for the Oregon New Neighbors Coordinated Access Program will mean that a new generation of Oregonians will feel safer and welcomed in our beautiful state.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration,

Janet Wright, a proud and compassionate Oregonian