

Submitter:

Michael Rice

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB149

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

My name is Michael Rice, a member of Havurah Shalom in Portland. I am writing to urge passage of SB 149-3 because SB 149-3 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other community members who are eligible, which will enable resettlement agencies and other community organizations to provide additional assistance to families when they arrive in Oregon. This support includes shelter and housing, enrolling in healthcare services, employment, and education opportunities, all of which are crucial to these families being able to stabilize and contribute to their community.

The Havurah community has been supporting immigrant and refugee families from Guatemala and Afghanistan, who, after initial resettlement with aid from NGOs, our congregation, and State of Oregon programs, are thriving.

By supporting newly arrived immigrant Oregonian families, 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. SB 149 is the result of refugee resettlement agencies, immigrant-serving CBOs working together to ensure that we continue to welcome new neighbors well.

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 SB 149-3 will mean that a new generation of Oregonians feels safer and welcomed in our state.

Michael Rice