

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

My name is Elena Barreto, and I am the Senior Early Childhood Policy Advisor with the Children's Institute. I am writing in support of SB 149, the "Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act". Access **to stability and belonging through support of coordinated services is important for a child's healthy development.** Proactive investments in early childhood supports, including SB 149, can break cycles of poverty and ensure long-term stability for children and families across the state. When we prioritize children, we improve lives and reduce crisis-driven spending.

This bill will do exactly what it says - **create coordinated access to the 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 and healthcare services, and begin a new life contributing to their community.

SB 149 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other community members who are eligible, which will enable resettlement agencies and other CBO's to provide additional assistance to families who may need a little extra support when they time out of traditional resettlement services.

**Every child has the right to thrive, and all families—regardless of background or income—need and deserve support in raising their children.** We do not need a personal connection to a child to understand that the decisions we make now will have a lasting impact on their lives. We are collectively responsible for creating and sustaining an environment that supports children and their families' safety and well-being.

**We urge you to support SB 149 to prioritize the well-being of our children and families.** Thank you for your time and for standing with all Oregonians.

Elena Barreto,  
Children's Institute