

Submitter: Gaile Baack

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB149

I have been volunteering with refugee resettlement for fifty years, since our first Vietnamese refugee family arrived in Portland under my church's sponsorship. I know firsthand that refugee families need guidance and help not just for ninety days, but for an extended period of time. Whether or not they receive the help that they need largely determines how quickly they succeed in integrating into our society and becoming productive American citizens.

It has very recently come to our attention a family whose case worker and financial help were terminated because of the federal funding cuts to the sponsoring agency. Without either the guidance of the case worker or financial support, the family has fallen behind on its rent payments and has an eviction notice, while the wife and mother is seven months pregnant and one child is facing open heart surgery. This should not happen and would not have happened if they'd had an ongoing caseworker and some continuing financial support.

I urge you to pass SB 149.