

4/9/2025

Administration
681 Center St NE
Salem, Oregon 97301
p. 503-588-5828
f. 503-588-5823

Re: Senate Bill 149 Testimony

Programs

**Crisis &
Information Hotline**
503.581.5535
1-800.560.5535

HOAP
503.588.5827

HOST
503.588.5825

**West Salem Clinic
Medical, Dental &
Mental Health**
503.378.7526

**Total Health
Community Clinic**
503.378.7526

Connection
971.239.5829

**Working in
partnership with:**



CITY OF *Salem*
AS YOUR SERVICE



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

My name is Kim Leathley, and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Northwest Human Services, which is a Federally Qualified Health Center serving Marion and Polk Counties. I am writing to advocate for the passage of SB 149, the "Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act", as it aligns with our mission to provide healthcare and social services to vulnerable populations, including refugees. Our clinic has a long-standing partner relationship with Salem For Refugees and has served as an initial point of contact for medical and mental health care services for those resettling and recovering from the physical and emotional toll of displacement. We would not be able to serve this population without the help of Case Managers collaborating with our Care Coordination team to help bridge the language and cultural barriers that exist upon their arrival. This bill will do exactly what it says – create coordinated access to the stabilizing support services for new Oregonians. Senate Bill 149 expands the Extended Case Management program for refugees and other community members who are eligible, which will enable resettlement agencies and partners like NWHS to provide additional assistance to families who may need a little extra support when they transition out of traditional resettlement services. Being able to connect them to a comprehensive health care clinic will create an additional layer of support for those as they grow and begin to flourish as permanent residents here in our community.

- SB 149 will create infrastructure for a coordinated system of reception. It will provide the resources needed for Oregonians who have arrived seeking safety and protection to find housing, health care, employment, and education opportunities. This ensures our new neighbors can achieve their own goals of successfully contributing to our state.
- Accessing medical services and care coordination not only improves quality of life but also promotes integration for refugees into their new communities, fostering resilience and stability for both the refugees and the broader community. Case managers provide essential support in accessing healthcare, housing, education, employment, and legal services, ensuring that families can *effectively integrate* into society and overcome the obstacles that might otherwise prevent them from achieving stability and independence.



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- **We have shown that we can work together to ensure that ALL communities thrive.** This bill was created with the commitment to the thriving of all communities. We are unwilling to pit the needs of one new Oregonian community against each other or other communities. Immigrants' contributions to our economy, our schools, our churches, and our communities are immeasurable, and we will continue to be here to serve and support their needs.

Senate Bill 149 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 the Oregon New Neighbors Coordinated Access Program will mean that a new generation of Oregonians feels safer and welcomed in our state.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration,

Kim Leathley
Chief Executive Officer
Northwest Human Services