



Date: 4/9/2025

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
From: Nansi López, Policy Director for Centro Cultural
Re: Support for SB 149-3

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 149-3. I am writing to support SB 149-3, Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act. My name is Nansi López, Policy Director for Centro Cultural. Centro Cultural stands in solidarity with the many community organizations supporting the needs of the Asylum/Refugee/Immigrant community. SB 149-3

Centro Cultural, the oldest and longest-serving Latino culturally-specific organization in Oregon, was founded 53 years ago by 14 migrant families. Our mission is to be a home for Latino cultures, serving the needs of our diverse community by promoting personal growth and empowerment. We have been a safe place for our local Latino community, low-income migrant farmworkers, immigrant refugee communities, and all who come to our doors. Our unique perspective and experience allow us to create lasting change for families of color and low-income individuals, stimulate systems change, and work with key stakeholders to reduce barriers and provide essential resources and services for the families we serve.

At a time when national policies instill fear and hate, Oregon, as a sanctuary state, must uphold its commitment to welcoming immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. SB 149-3, Oregon's New Neighbors Coordinated Access Act, is a testament to the success of state and local government agencies and many nonprofit agencies working together to support newcomers coming to Oregon. This collaborative effort, which uplifts the voices of our most vulnerable Oregonians, will solidify Oregon's stance as a state that supports its community members and stands firm in its values as a welcoming state.

As a community-based organization supporting newcomers, we can attest to the importance of expanding culturally-specific services to all newcomers who are in dire need and support upon arrival. Culturally specific services are especially important because they offer a holistic service with a lens that truly understands the newcomers' experience. These services provide the foundation for great success and opportunities for newcomers to thrive.

In closing, we ask that committee members remember Oregon's past, present, and future by supporting all Oregonians, including the pregnant mothers, and children we have personally had to turn away when seeking emergency shelter due to lack of



funding. Commit to BOLD actions. We urge the Senate Committee to support SB 149-3 and commit to making Oregon home to all who find refuge here in the state of Oregon. Your support is crucial in ensuring that Oregon continues to uphold its values as a welcoming state.

Sincerely,

Nansi López, Policy Director for Centro Cultural
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