

Submitter: Sara Lockman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB149
Testimony in Support of SB 149

At Jory Mental Health Collective, we believe that no matter where someone is from or when they arrived in Oregon, everyone deserves a chance to build a better future for themselves and their children. We care about our neighbors and believe in an Oregon where people come first—where families can stay together, have stable housing, and feel connected to their communities.

While resettlement is a federal responsibility, the lack of action at the national level means local communities must step up. We believe Oregon can lead the way and show what it means to stand with our neighbors—because no one wants to see children sleeping outside.

SB 149 gives us the opportunity to build the kind of support system new Oregonians need. It provides access to housing, health care, employment, and education—key resources that help families stabilize and thrive. Most new arrivals only need temporary support, and this bill offers just that, along with case management tailored to their cultures and needs.

Supporting new Oregonians doesn't take away from existing services—it helps ease the pressure on our already strained housing and homeless systems. This bill brings immediate help while also creating long-term coordination across the state.

Community groups like ours, along with nonprofits, churches, and grassroots advocates, have done everything we can to fill the gaps—but we can't do it alone. SB 149 builds on a successful pilot program that already helped over 125 families find shelter and start new lives. This bill would expand that success and bring it statewide.

We've shown we can work together to make sure all communities thrive. Let's pass SB 149 and continue building an Oregon that welcomes everyone and gives every family the chance to succeed.

Thank you.

Sara M Lockman