



OREGON LATINO

agenda for action

DATE: March 8, 2013
TO: Joint Ways and Means Committee, General Budget Subcommittee
FROM: Oregon Latino Agenda for Action
RE: Support for the Oregon Advocacy Commissions / Exemption Request

The Oregon Latino Agenda for Action (OLAA) is in support of exempting the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office from further budget cuts and requests increased support in specific areas of need. Culturally specific non-profits for the most part, provide direct service to communities of color in Oregon and rely on the these commission to keep them informed of legislation that will impact them in the areas of education, economic development, public safety, and others.

As Oregon demographics have changed with an increasing number of communities of color, women, GLBT, and immigrants it is even more important that the State provide education and access to policy and the legislative process. Among other Latino organizations, OLAA strives to inform and prepare our communities for civic engagement. Without accurate, consistent, and legislatively appointed serving as liaisons and representatives for the legislative process for communities, and representing the community perspective for the Governor and legislature, Oregon would not be providing equitable representation. Many in our community are not able to engage you directly due to full-time employment that precludes them from taking time off to testify, lack of computer technology or other access to information on policies that impact them and their children, or other barriers that the majority culture and business communities have access to.

The OACO plays a vital role in our state's democracy and we request your consideration to make their budget whole.

Respectfully,

Maria Rubio, Co-Chair

Jessica Rodriguez-Montegna