

March 11, 2015

RE: HB 3015

Dear Chair Hoyle and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 3015, which addresses names after entering into marriage or domestic partnership. My husband and I experienced the limitations of the current system when we married in 2013.

The proposed expansion of name alternatives is an important step toward recognizing and respecting the diversity of cultures in Oregon, which bring similarly diverse naming conventions. I would like to share our experience as an example and express my support of this bill.

My husband is from Argentina and has two surnames - representing his paternal and maternal families, respectively. I, as a 38 year old woman with a professional identity largely dependent upon my name, wished to keep my maiden name and hyphenate the first of my husband's surnames. Unfortunately, this was not an option. Under the current system, if I wished to keep my name, my choices were to keep my name alone or add both of my husband's surnames to my own. We entertained the thought of three surnames, but ultimately found it too burdensome. Out of desire to share a name with my husband as we start a family, I ultimately dropped my maiden name and accepted both of my husband's. I have now settled into the new name, but it did require a professional transition period.

In addition to our story, I would expect similar difficulties to arise in most Latino families where both partners have two surnames prior to marriage. I appreciate your consideration of this bill and support the expansion of name options to couples in marriages and domestic partnerships.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah C. Lara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Christine (Schreck) Lara Silva