

**Testimony of Amber Hollister in support of HB 3525
House Judiciary Committee**

April 13, 2015

Chair Barker, members of the committee:

My name is Amber Hollister and I am the Deputy General Counsel for the Oregon State Bar. I am here today on behalf of the Oregon State Bar Board of Governors to express the bar's enthusiastic support for HB 3525.

HB 3525 helps address what we at the bar believe is a very serious problem – the prevalence of unlicensed non-lawyer “immigration consultants” – often referred to as “notarios” – who prey on unsuspecting members of the public, especially in our immigrant communities.

Preventing notario fraud is a major goal of the bar's Unlawful Practice of Law Committee, and under current law, it is already unlawful for a person to act as an immigration consultant for compensation if that person is not a member of the Oregon State Bar.

The specific problem addressed by HB 3525 is when notarios use threats of violence or other wrongful conduct to coerce members of the public to keep them from reporting the notario fraud to law enforcement or to the bar. This bill would define that conduct as a type of obstruction of justice, which is a Class A misdemeanor.

This legislation is the product of a workgroup involving the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Commission on Asian Affairs, representatives of the Oregon Department of Justice, the Oregon Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office.

The OSB believes that this bill is a needed response to this serious problem and we encourage the committee to give it your full support. We understand that there are still issues to be resolved with the bill as written, and we look forward to working with all stakeholders to refine the language.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Hollister