

Co-chairs Roblan, Holvey and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Adriana Miranda, I am the Executive Director for Causa. Causa is an immigrants' rights organization that works to improve the lives of Latinx immigrants and their families in Oregon through advocacy, coalition building, leadership development, and civic engagement. Latinx immigrants and their families are the heart of Causa and inspire, implement, and champion our work. Immigrant Oregonians enrich our communities and state. We are your neighbors, friends, family members, local business owners, students, and most importantly we are Oregonians.

I am writing to you in response to the global pandemic COVID-19 and the impact this is having on our most vulnerable frontline Oregonians. Although Governor Brown has taken bold actions to slow the spread of the virus, there are a variety of community needs we must consider and be prepared to address. First, we need to consider the impacts on our low-income and working-class families living paycheck to paycheck. We need to build greater support for workers and families who are infected with the virus or who are sick and have not been tested, ensuring they receive timely and effective medical care and other support — regardless of their ability to pay for it or their immigration status.

During this time of great uncertainty, those most impacted are immigrants, refugees, individuals experiencing homelessness, communities of color, children, youth, as well as folks in immigration detention centers and in prisons. We ask that you show your full support to our communities to ensure that we are putting those most impacted at the forefront.

In addition to the policy document submitted by the worker advocates, I ask you to reflect on the policy recommendations below and to please focus on our need to make sure *all* our communities have access to the programs and supports listed below. This means:

**Health Care Access:**

- Provide free COVID-19 testing and treatment. This should be made available with clear messaging that accessing this care will not trigger the public charge ground of inadmissibility and that no questions about immigration status will be asked of those who access treatment.

- We need to make sure no family will face adverse consequences related to their immigration status for getting the critical help they need and that our immigrant and  
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- refugee populations know this and feel safe accessing and calling to ask the state for help.

**Outreach and Communication:**

- We need to invest in community organizations with existing relationships to vulnerable populations to be able to do needed outreach to share critical information and to help people navigate the systems of support that our government provides. These are the best and most trusted messengers in the communities that will be hit hardest. Information needs to be presented and translated into multiple languages.
- We need to invest in a worker and family support hotline that gives people real-time answers in a variety of languages on their rights under existing law and information about programs they may qualify for (including health care, rental assistance, child care assistance, food assistance, and help businesses with questions, and when applicable accurate information about how service access does or does not impact immigration status should be made available, etc.).
- We need to invest heavily in translation and interpretation support and robust outreach to vulnerable communities, including Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) families, people/families earning low incomes, seniors, people living with chronic illness or disability, and people with unstable work arrangements.

**Assistance to impacted communities**

- We need to grant financial resources directly to community partners who can help our front-line communities. We ask our State Government to set up an emergency fund for non-profit organizations of the state who serve immigrants, refugees, day laborers, farmworkers, and people of color, all of whom will be disproportionately impacted the most by COVID-19.
- Pass state-wide rent and mortgage forgiveness
- Provide free food and essential resources to low-income families
- Provide universal childcare for those who continue working

- Provide small business assistance grants to child care facility owners, to allow them to continue operations and much needed child-care needs to our front-line workers during this health crisis without going out of business.
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- We need to create a grant program providing funds for small businesses owned by BIPOC communities who see the loss of profits due to COVID-19.
- Provide commercial rent forgiveness during the duration of the administrative closure.
- Provide income or financial assistance to individuals and families who are impacted by the COVID closures but are unable to access unemployment benefits.

### **Support for incarcerated individuals**

- We need to be moving quickly to work with all stakeholders in the criminal legal system to ensure that the health and safety of staff and impacted community members are being taken into consideration, from the point of initial contact with law enforcement, through incarceration, to release.
- Support the release of all youth in juvenile detention centers by using the power of parole and commutation.
- Emergency shelters for youth impacted by homelessness
- The release of all persons with non-violent convictions in jails and prisons to reduce the risk of spread in our highly populated prisons

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with you on these policy solutions to serve our most vulnerable Oregonians.