

Greetings Chair Riley and Members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Carolina Faria Autran de Morais, but most people just call me Lina.

I am a legislative assistant to Senator Sara Gelser, however I'm here today as a constituent of Senator Olsen.

Thank you for being willing to listen to my testimony on Senate Bill 933, which requires that public forms collecting demographic information on a person's race or ethnicity allow for the selection of more than one category.

I immigrated to the United States at the age of 15, which as I'm sure most of you know is a pivotal age in developing and understanding personal identity.

It was at that age that I first encountered the need to define myself as Latina or white, because the option to select both was not given to me.

When you ask me "Are you white or are you Latina," you are really asking me whether my identity is ruled by the culture that raised me or the way the world sees me.

And my question to you is: why not both?

Because our ability to navigate the many obstacles imposed on us through our lives is a direct result of the intersectionality of identities that we hold.

To conflate my experience as an extremely white passing Latina with that of my fellow immigrants that do not share my phenotypic expression, a type of appearance which makes it so that I can more easily circumvent the often subtle mechanisms of oppression that mar the lives of many people of color, does not paint a full picture of the diverse experiences we as immigrants have.

We use this type of demographic data to guide conversations on policy and equity, so when we fail to account for the intersectionality of identity, we are making assumptions based off of incomplete data.

If we are truly committed to creating an equitable experience for all Oregonians, we must ensure that our data accurately represents the populations it is meant to.

Senate Bill 933 would do just that. And that is why I strongly urge you to pass this bill.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Carolina F.A. de Morais