



To: Joint Committee on Transportation
From: Amber Halbert Childress
RE: House Bill 2015: Equal Access to Roads Act

Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

My name is Amber Halbert Childress and I am co-owner of High Ridge Roofing and Construction LLC in Springfield, OR and a member of Main Street Alliance. I would like to offer my support of HB 2015, Equal Access to Roads Act, both as a small business owner and a mother of mixed ethnicity children.

I was born and raised in Springfield, which is even still today, pretty rural. Our town was founded by the timber industry and has always had a very diverse workforce. We are a snapshot of rural Oregon and we rely on one another, regardless of our citizenship status, to make our local economy thrive. When I met my children's father, I didn't know about his citizenship status, nor did I care. I fell in love with a man and he just happened to be from Mexico. We got married and had two beautiful children together. Years later when drivers licenses for non-citizens were taken away, things got a lot harder for our family. I had to work and drive our children to everything because he couldn't anymore. I did double duty and the stress on our family was unbearable. After 10 years of marriage, we divorced.

Two years ago, I became partner in a small roofing and construction company and we currently employ six people. Our industry has a lot of folks from diverse backgrounds-qualified, hardworking people, who want nothing more than to provide for their families. As we look to grow our business, it is important that our employees can legally use our work trucks, drive to get supplies and to job locations, as needed without the fear of going to jail or being deported. This is why it is time for us to pass HB 2015. We have done enough to working families and small businesses who rely on our loyal employee's ability to get to work and do the job they have always done.

I appreciate the fact that this bill allows a recipient to have a real drivers license, using a system at the DMV that already issues these to others working in our state, who are noncitizens. We know that profiling happens and if one of my workers had a card that looked different than a traditional license, they could get targeted and possibly deported.

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My children have been terrified for their father, for the last two years as we have seen the rise in hate crimes in Oregon. Those that oppose this bill are backed by hate groups who have no place in Oregon. Please do the right thing and support the passage of HB 2015, our blended citizenship families, our small businesses and our communities are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Amber Halbert Childress
High Ridge Roofing and Construction LLC.
Springfield, OR

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