

**Kate Brown**  
Governor



**Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs**  
“Advocating Equality and Diversity”  
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House Committee on Rules  
Testimony in Support of HB 2337  
March 23, 2021

Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chair Drazan and Vice-Chair Paul Holvey, and Members Bonham, Fahey, Salinas, and Zika,

For the record, my name is Joseph Gallegos. I am a retired academic with over forty years of teaching and administration in higher education. My areas of research and publication focused mainly on cross cultural mental health. I also served in the Oregon House of Representatives (HD 30 2013-2016). Currently I am proud to say I am a Commissioner on the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

As a lifelong advocate on behalf of BIPOC communities I can attest to the importance and critical nature of HB 2337. I have been a Commissioner for OCHA for four years and have participated with OACO staff in their public policy research activity. The office supports an efficient and rigorous policy research agenda. The OACO is informed by commissioners from throughout the state. Thus, the Commission represents the voice of Oregonians. That voice is translated through timely data into legislative recommendations. The Commissioners follow up with their recommendations by providing testimony on behalf of bills critical to the welfare of BIPOC and women’s issues.

Thus, the OACO is positioned in a very purposeful way to inform legislators of the facts relating to the needs of Oregonians in a non-partisan way. The recent research report, [Crisis de Nuestro Bienestar](#), is an example of what the OACO does and can do. The model of research used insures community involvement and access to the research and its findings. Providers are enabled by the data as well as is the legislature and community members.

As a commissioner, I wholly support the passage of HB 2337. As a person of color, I cannot think of a bill, whose passage would make me more proud to be an Oregonian.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joseph Gallegos". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Joseph Gallegos, Ph.D.  
OCHA Commissioner