



Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

DATE: March 24, 2021

TO: Honorable Representative Janelle Bynum, Chair
Representatives Noble and Power, Vice Chairs
and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Lauren Herbert, MD, FAAP
Oregon Pediatric Society Member

SUBJECT: Support for HB 3265 - Strengthening Oregon's Sanctuary Law

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Our membership is committed to improving and protecting the health and well-being of all children in Oregon, as well as their families. My name is Lauren Herbert, and I am a pediatrician and pediatric infectious diseases specialist in Springfield. Most of the children in my clinic are children of immigrants from Latin America. I am writing to request your support for HB 3265, which the OPS board of directors also endorses.

All children in our state should feel safe and welcome. I have followed most of the children in my clinic since birth, and shared with the parents the delight of first smiles, first words, and first steps. I have shared the parents' pride as their children have learned to read, to play music, and to help out with the work of the family. Most of the parents in my clinic emphasize respect, responsibility, and education. The children and their families are integral parts of our schools, our churches, our sports teams, our community.

There are many ways the incarceration and deportation of parents has hurt the children and families in my clinic. A father was pulled over for a minor traffic violation. He was arrested for being undocumented, and then deported to Mexico, leaving behind his wife and three adolescent children. To keep the family together, the mother moved to Oaxaca. The children had excelled in school in Eugene, but found it difficult to go to school in a country that was foreign to them. They missed their friends, teachers, and community. The parents made the difficult decision for the mother and the children to return to the US. While the children are again doing well in school, the family is broken and the children have little communication with their father. The mother is working a minimum-wage paying job and has difficulty supporting the children on her own.



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Racial profiling not only adversely affects the families in my clinic, but also colleagues and friends. One of my coworkers, who is a member of a large Latinx family in the community, told me that she and family members always carry identification with them, knowing that they could be stopped by police for a minor issue and then asked to present identification verifying their legal status. Her brother, who had grown up in the United States but never completed the application process for legal immigrant status, was pulled over for suspicion of intoxication. When he did not have documentation of legal immigrant status, he was taken to the local jail. The family paid his bail. As soon as he walked out, he was taken by an ICE agent to Tacoma and was subsequently deported to a country he had not been to since he was a toddler. It was clear that the law enforcement had communicated with ICE.

Over the last year, I have become much more aware of the depths of the roots of racism in our country and state, and now see that this racism can affect how laws are enforced. Oregonians passed the Sanctuary Law in 1987 and reaffirmed Oregon's sanctuary status by defeating Measure 105 in 2018. We believe that all Oregonians should be protected from racial profiling. However, there are holes in the law that need to be closed. We need to strengthen the law so that children and families in our community are protected from being torn apart and from unequal treatment by our government institutions because of their race.

Please join OPS and me in supporting HB 3265. Thank you for your work in supporting all of Oregon's communities.