



Testimony in Support of HB 3265 March 25, 2021

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Noble and Power, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Oregon's *Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice* (IMIrJ) strongly supports House Bill 3265, the Sanctuary Promise Act.

Founded in 2006, IMIrJ is in relationship with over 160 faith communities throughout the state. Our IMIrJ community includes thousands of people of faith and fierce love from a myriad of backgrounds and religious traditions. We are immigrants and US-born. We live in Oregon's rural and small towns, suburbs, and urban centers. Together, we are united in our profound respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all human beings -- and in our commitment to love our neighbors, as we honor the many paths our ancestors and families traveled that have led each of us to this shared home we now call Oregon.

Many of us also share a reverence for the significance of sanctuary in both a spiritual and political sense. At a fundamental level, Sanctuary is about belonging and security. It's about feeling safe enough to breathe deep, to laugh, rest, worship, and play. Safe enough to put in a hard day's work and sleep easy when the day is done. Safe enough to simply be. Unfortunately, the threat of racial profiling, harassment, detention, and separation from one's family are still very real for many Oregonians -- including many beloved members of our congregations and communities. It's especially acute for Oregonians who are immigrants and people of color.

For over 15 years, IMIrJ has accompanied and organized alongside immigrant Oregonians to ensure justice and welcome for all our state's residents. Throughout these 15 years, we've witnessed our family members, friends, and fellow congregants being unjustly pulled over in traffic stops, detained at county courthouses, torn away from our communities in traumatic ICE raids and operations, and held in deplorable and dehumanizing conditions in local jails and private detention centers. We've grieved the additional and irreparable loss and harm that result when people are deported through these practices. We've seen the way the involvement of local law enforcement in ICE's predatory tactics have eroded trust and participation in the civic life and heartbeat of our communities. And we've grown increasingly frustrated by the lack of recourse for individuals whose rights have been violated under our current sanctuary statute.

HB 3265 offers Oregon an opportunity to address many of these issues and finally make good on our 34-year-old promise of Sanctuary. The Sanctuary Promise Act is a crucial and meaningful step towards creating the welcoming and inclusive state that all Oregonians deserve.

We know that HB 3265 won't solve all the problems and injustices facing immigrant Oregonians and it won't keep ICE out of our communities altogether. But until our federal laws and policies recognize migration as a global phenomenon and human right, respect the dignity and safeguard the well-being of all peoples, and address the root causes of migration, Oregon has the legal right and moral responsibility to do all we can to protect Oregonians from harassment, racial profiling, and the fundamentally unjust systems of immigrant detention, deportation and family separation. Passing HB 3265 is the right thing to do. It will make Oregon safer for all.

Our IMIrJ community joins our voice with those of the overwhelming majority of Oregon voters who voted in 2018 to uphold Oregon's sanctuary law. Together we say it's time for Oregon to live up to our promise as a Sanctuary state. We urge your YES vote on HB 3265.