



RE: Yes on HB 3230

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

My name is Coua Xiong and I am writing in support of HB 3230 on behalf of APANO. We serve Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout Oregon to build power, develop leaders, and advance equity through organizing, advocacy, cultural work, and community development.

This Universal Legal Representation bill will provide immigrant Oregonians legal support during a difficult and traumatic process. Despite a new president and administration, Oregon's immigrants are still very vulnerable to deportation which is why we need accessible, culturally responsive, and community focused legal services.

Universal Legal Representation expands the Equity Corps pilot program funded by Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and the State of Oregon to create statewide infrastructure for immigration legal defense, such as deportations, and prepare for any major changes in immigration policy. Here are some key facts on Universal Legal Representation:

- The program would create a statewide call center that would provide direct contacts and streamline access for those seeking help.
- Impacted communities would be able to choose their provider.
- Community based organizations that already have deep connections to the community would oversee the program's policy and fiscal decisions and have an active role in coordinating.
- The statewide representation team would embed lawyers, through fellowships, at CBOs to ensure community members could turn to the organizations they already know and trust in times of need.

We know that the right legal representation can make a big difference in a person's case! A community member without legal representation is 5.5 times more likely to be deported regardless of the merit of their case. We've already seen this same kind of community focused system in action. By taking the lessons learned from the Oregon Worker Relief Fund model, we can build a similar system that allows our communities of color to connect with the organizations they already know and trust to help them during this difficult time.

According to the Oregon Center for Public Policy, one in every 10 Oregon children live with a family member without legal status. We also know that Asians make up 16% of Oregon's undocumented community. Everyone deserves access to legal services and protection in order to thrive.

We urge you to support HB 3230 and create an Oregon that we all deserve to call home.



Thank you,
Coua Xiong, Civic Engagement Manager