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April 19, 2021

Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair
Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair
Joint Committee - Ways and Means
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Johnson, Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair Rayfield and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to urge you to consider Gresham's request for investment in outreach, prevention, and intervention services for youth and families in Gresham and East Multnomah County. As the Executive Director of the Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), I know the challenges our community is facing. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with deeply rooted systemic barriers, have negatively affected the physical, social, and economic wellbeing of our clients.

We have limited culturally and linguistically specific services to meet the growing community need in East Multnomah County, including Gresham. We have seen that investing in building relationships, providing healthy and safe alternatives to violence, and intervening with the resources and services families need in times of crisis does indeed work. We hope to expand these efforts where they are needed most.

We see this as an opportunity for the Oregon Legislative Assembly to invest in programs that carry the potential to improve public safety outcomes and have a positive impact on young people who need our support, especially during these challenging times. Thank you for considering this funding request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lee Po Cha', is written over a white rectangular area.

Lee Po Cha
Executive Director