

Cynthia Ramirez

4475 McMaster Ct Ne Salem, Oregon 97305

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Attn: Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield; Vice Co-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith; and members of Oregon's Joint Committee on Ways & Means

I am writing to you today in response to your calls for equity-based policies. As members of Oregon's Ways & Means Committee, I am calling on you to support HB 2819, and continued investment in the Worker Relief Fund. These are all priority items in *The People's Budget*.

The Oregon Worker Relief Fund provides financial support directly to Oregonians who have lost their jobs yet are ineligible for Unemployment Insurance and federal stimulus relief due to their immigration status, and now face hunger, homelessness, and economic hardship. Fully funding the Oregon Worker Relief Fund would give direct support to workers who need access to a financial safety net now.

We also ask you to support HB 2819 because all workers no matter their place of origin should be able to earn enough to care for their families.

- HB 2819 allows all income-eligible workers in Oregon to claim the state's EITC, regardless of how they file their taxes.
- HB 2819 means that 90,000 U.S. citizens living in mixed-status households in Oregon (mostly children) will benefit from the EITC.
- This bill has the potential to impact over 34,000 Oregon families—predominantly Latinx and Asian Americans—who file their taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).

This bill matters to me personally because my parents were both undocumented when they first entered the United States. I have heard their stories of how difficult it was to afford basic things and the amount of hours they had to work. My mom was unable to work because she had to take care of her children, so my dad had to spend many hours working to provide a stable life for us. They are both now citizens so they have access to more benefits compared to families who are undocumented. If it was expensive for them back then, imagine what families are suffering right now. The price of food, clothes, rent, water, etc. has inflated drastically the past 10 years. It is very difficult for our low income families to support themselves. We must think about our low income communities who do some of the toughest jobs in this country.

Our BIPOC communities are sacrificing their lives, health, and time working extremely taxing jobs in Oregon. They deserve to have funds to help them survive. They need financial support not yesterday, not next week, not next year, but now. Passing this bill can impact so many

families who are desperately in need of help, and it hurts to see them suffering. Especially during a pandemic.

I believe that Oregon's economic recovery should help those who were hurt most by COVID-19 and our corresponding recession: primarily Oregonians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, women; immigrants; and/or LGBTQ+. Investments that are rooted in racial, gender, and economic justice are what this moment calls for. Now is not the time for Oregon to save money or cut budgets.

By prioritizing the policies included in The People's Budget, you will build an equity-based budget that ensures Oregon emerges stronger than before and is ready to weather future storms. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to give feedback.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Ramirez

Oral Testimony

Hello Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield, and Vice Co-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith.

My name is Cynthia Ramirez and I am from Salem which is in District 5. I am here today to testify in support of HB 2819, and continued investment in the Oregon Worker Relief Fund, which are all included as priority items in *The People's Budget*.

I also ask you to support HB 2819 because all workers no matter their place of origin should be able to earn enough to care for their families. HB 2819 allows all income-eligible workers in Oregon to claim the state's EITC, regardless of how they file their taxes.

This bill matters to me personally because my parents were both undocumented when they first entered the United States. I have heard their stories of how difficult it was to afford basic things and the amount of hours they had to work. My mom was unable to work because she had to take care of her children, so my dad had to spend many hours working to provide a stable life for us. They are both now citizens so they have access to more benefits compared to families who are undocumented. If it was expensive for them back then, imagine what families are suffering right now. The price of food, clothes, rent, water, etc. has drastically risen in the past 10 years. It is very difficult for our low income families to support themselves. We must think about our low income communities who do some of the toughest jobs in this country.

Our BIPOC communities are sacrificing their lives, health, and time, working extremely taxing jobs in Oregon. They deserve to have funds to help them survive. They need financial support not yesterday, not next week, not next year, but now. Passing this bill and budget can impact so many families who are desperately in need of help, and it hurts to see them suffering. Especially during a pandemic. A lot of our community did not receive any assistance during the pandemic, and haven't recovered. We must work together and harder to provide support for our BIPOC, immigrant, LGBTQ plus, communities.

I believe that Oregon's economic recovery should help those who were hurt most by COVID-19 and our corresponding recession: primarily Oregonians who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color, women; immigrants; and/or LGBTQ+. Investments that are rooted in racial, gender, and economic justice are what this moment calls for. Now is not the time for Oregon to save money or cut budgets.

By prioritizing the policies included in *The People's Budget*, you will build an equity-based budget that ensures Oregon emerges stronger than before and is ready to weather future storms.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to give feedback.