

COURTNEY NERON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 26



Testimony in Support of HB 4122

February 1, 2022

Hello Chair Williams, Vice-Chairs Ruiz, and Scharf, and members of the House Human Services Committee.

For the record, my name is Courtney Neron and I am the State Representative for House District 26 which includes growing communities from Hillsboro through Wilsonville along the urban growth boundary.

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients contribute significantly to our growing communities, local economy, and workforce as they own local businesses, attend schools, volunteer, and are deeply connected to our state. They are my students, friends, colleagues, and neighbors. Many DACA recipients have experienced unstable employment due to the pandemic, resulting in lost income and difficulty paying the \$500 renewal fee to stay. Many DACA recipients work as essential workers, supporting industries that have stayed open and been most at risk of COVID infections. When we support DACA recipients to maintain their immigration status, we stabilize communities, families and livelihoods rooted in Oregon.

HB 4122 allows the Oregon Department of Human Services to work with community-based organizations, who are well positioned to support this work, to create grants to cover the renewal application fees for thousands of DACA recipients and help maintain employment. This one-time grant recognizes the contributions of DACA recipients in Oregon and acknowledges the barriers that DACA Oregonians face when they must pay this fee while also paying bills, saving for education, and contributing to our workforce through the pandemic. Immigration is complicated, controversial, and largely a federal issue, but HB4122 offers state recognition of the contributions of DACA recipients and the value of stable Oregon communities.

Thank you and I urge your support of HB4122, The Dreamers Belong Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Neron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

State Representative Courtney Neron