

Submitter: Liliana Tobar

On Behalf  
Of: Causa

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110  
Implementation

Measure: SB1543

SUBJECT: Yes on SB 1543

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 1543 which would provide immigrant Oregonians with legal support during deportation proceedings. 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.

Many people in removal proceedings have valid legal claims to remain in the country and continue to contribute to Oregon's communities, but have no way to articulate these claims without the assistance of counsel. This bill safeguards due process by allowing immigrant Oregonians to access the rights afforded to them under existing law.

Representation by an attorney is the single most outcome determinative factor in deportation proceedings. Representation by an attorney improves someone's chances of staying with their family by 457 percent.

SB 1543 further expands the successful 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.

Oregon is home to thousands of immigrants and refugees who live in urban and rural areas statewide, and are critical to the state's cultural and economic vitality. Immigrant Oregonians work in key Oregon industries, are essential workers, and own small businesses that contribute to the vibrancy of our communities.

As a member of an immigrant business owning family in Southern Oregon, we struggle with legal complexities of entrepreneurship and daily risks of identity exposure. My family's goal is to utilize the skills they possess to fill a community need and demand for landscaping, while advancing economically to provide stability and security for us. As a business owning family, affordable and accessible legal representation is imperative for our sustainability. In thinking about long-term

sustainability of our communities, we must take on an inclusive perspective and approach that advocates for the protection of people and identifies the ways in which injustices are happening to marginalized communities. Addressing legal support for immigrant communities is a step toward addressing a larger sustainability issue of our community.

We must protect the rights of everyone who calls Oregon home and support their ability to thrive. By doing so, we can continue being a place that values families and communities.

Thank you.