

Chair Prosanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Subject: Yes on SB 1543

My name is Barbara Raymond. I live in Forest Grove, Oregon.

I am writing in support of HB 3230, Universal Legal Representation

Even with a new President and administration, we in Oregon still have an immigrant population that is very vulnerable to deportation. Our confused and confusing immigration system is often difficult to navigate. Since deportation inflicts trauma and violence in its process, especially affecting black, indigenous and people of color, it is only just that those who must face such a possibility have available and accessible to them culturally responsive and focused legal services.

The proposed bill would provide these services:

The statewide representation team would embed lawyers, through fellowships, at Community Based Organizations to ensure community members could turn to the organizations they already know and trust in times of need.

A statewide call center would provide direct contacts and streamlined access for those seeking help.

Impacted communities would be able to choose their provider.

CBOs would oversee the program's policy and fiscal decisions and have an active role in coordinating.

Oregon is home to thousands of immigrants and refugees who live in cities and towns statewide, and who are critical to our cultural and economic wellbeing. Many of them have vulnerabilities to deportation that can be put to rest by legal representation. This representation is the single most outcome determinative factor in deportation proceedings. It improves someone's chances of staying with their family and community by a staggering 457 percent.

I join with many Oregonians in urging you to move this bill forward with a view to justice for a very vulnerable and vital population.