

HB 3176 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/8, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS), in consultation with Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA), to establish the Welcome and Reception Program to provide immigrants and refugees with access to short-term and long-term support services. Appropriates unspecified General Fund moneys to DHS for support services. Requires DHS to contract with up to 12 organizations to provide services and with Oregon State Bar to provide regulatory oversight of organizations providing immigration-related legal services. Requires participating organizations to biennially report to DHS on outcomes. Directs OIRA to convene stakeholders to coordinate and implement policy recommendations that would benefit immigrant and refugee communities. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Recent arrival of refugees from Afghanistan
- Recent legislation expanding access to services for immigrants and refugees
- Demographic changes in workforce
- Eligible organizations that would deliver services
- Services provided by refugee resettlement agencies
- Legal representation services available to immigrants and refugees
- Potential access to federal funds
- Access to early learning and child care for immigrants and refugees
- Features of refugee welcome center and process of welcoming refugees

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Replaces the measure. Establishes Welcome and Reception Program within Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) to provide immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers with access to short-term and long-term support services. Appropriates unspecified General Fund moneys to OIRA to implement program. Directs OIRA to contract and coordinate with organizations to provide support services. Requires that organizations be compensated according to the number of individuals served. Requires OIRA to coordinate with community-based organizations to provide legal services through state's universal representation program. Directs OIRA to begin providing services by March 31, 2024. Requires contracted organizations to report on outcomes to OIRA by June 30, 2025. Requires OIRA to report on program's implementation and status to interim legislative committees by September 1, 2025. Modifies duties of OIRA to require coordination and implementation of policy recommendations in collaboration with stakeholders and provision of outreach, education, and training to public and private entities on improving access to public services. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

BACKGROUND:

The Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) was established in 2021 by Senate Bill 778. Senate Bill 1550 (2022) transferred OIRA from the Office of the Governor to the Department of Human Services (DHS). OIRA is charged with advocating for the interests of immigrants and refugees, collecting and monitoring data on immigrant and refugee populations in Oregon, and advocating for and analyzing policy proposals that affect immigrants and refugees.

Before OIRA was established, the Legislative Assembly enacted House Bill 2508 in 2019 (codified as ORS 411.139), which directed the Department of Human Services to award grants to certain organizations to provide various navigation and assistance services for refugees. More recently, the legislature passed Senate Bill 1543 in 2022, which established a universal legal representation program to provide assistance with immigration matters.

House Bill 3176 directs DHS, in consultation with OIRA, to establish the Welcome and Reception Program that would coordinate organizations to provide support services to immigrants and refugees.