

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services,

For the record, my name is Melina Moran, Chair of the Oregon Commission for Hispanic Affairs (OCHA). OCHA serves the people of Oregon to empower and support Latinos through our special roles as policy advisors to Oregon state policymakers and leaders. OCHA is a catalyst that empowers partnerships between the state government and Hispanic communities in rural and urban areas to ensure success for all Latinos by addressing issues at the policy level. Today, I write to you in support of Oregon House Bill 2957.

There are over 11,000 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients in the state of Oregon. They are teachers, medical professionals, business owners, and students who have made Oregon their home. People who were brought to the United States as children and have known no other home. Their parents made the decision to bring them here for a better life. For them to stay, they are forced to apply and renew DACA, costing them \$495 every two years plus legal fees. HB 2957, which would allocate funding and create a program to work with community-based organizations to provide financial assistance for DACA renewal and legal fees, could mean a life-saving difference for DACA recipients.

This is not a fix to the innumerable problem within our immigration system, but merely a small step in the right direction. My own family members are DACA recipients and have become doctors and laborers; they are critical pillars in our community. For some, the financial burden and time invested in completing the application and the anxiety caused by waiting and wondering if their application is accepted is yet another burden to bear.

I strongly urge the committee to join the Oregon Commission of Hispanic Affairs in support of HB 2957.



Melina Moran

**Oregon Commission
on Hispanic Affairs**

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Melina Moran, MSN, APRN

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