

February 24, 2023

Re: Yes to HB 2957, Dreamers Belong Act.

Chair, Vice Chairs and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nacia Castañeda, I live in Washington County in Oregon. I am writing in support of HB 2957, Dreamers Belong Act and I respectfully ask for your support on this bill; HB 2957.

I currently work at SOAR Immigration Legal Services a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. I have seen many concerned clients come in to the office asking if there is any type of financial assistance to help them cover the current USCIS fee of \$495 and attorney fees to renew their DACA application. Many of them have an expired Employment Authorization Card because they have stretched their income to be able to cover those fees and still are struggling. It is very sad and concerning to see their anxiety, stress and frustration because the fees are so high and the renewal process is basically every 18 months in order to make sure they receive their renewed EAD card in time so their employer won't end their employment.

I sincerely believe that the Dreamers Belong Act will alleviate the financial burden and emotional stress of many frontline and essential hard working families. I also believe the family members of DACAmented individuals should have financial support to cover immigration legal fees for legal consultation and process they may be eligible but cannot afford. I kindly and respectfully ask that you vote in favor of HB 2957.

Best,

Nacia Castañeda