

April 21, 2023

Ways and Means Road Show Testimony 2023

Re: HB 2957, Providing grants for Immigration Legal Services

Good evening Co-Chairs, Co-Vice Chairs and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for making time to hear my testimony. My name is Salomon, I live in Marion County in Oregon. I am a US Citizen and I am here in support of HB 2957, which would provide funding to obtain a legal immigration consultation with an immigration attorney as well as pay for the attorney and USCIS fees.

In 30 years, I encounter noncitizens on a regular basis. Noncitizens are struggling to make ends meet because they do not have an income high enough to cover the fees for a legal immigration consultation and for immigration services. I have witnessed how parents struggle to find employment that pays well to afford payment for an immigration case. This ends up in emotional frustration and causes a ripple effect on the kids. I have seen how kids suffer because their parents or guardians face many difficulties due to the lack of having a permanent immigration status.

Many times, people don't know they are eligible to obtain a permanent immigration status because they have not had the money to pay for an immigration consultation. Many don't even seek a consultation because of how expensive it is to hire an immigration attorney. HB 2957 would allow for someone who has a legal immigration case but does not have the money to pay for the process and service to get a consultation and have the grant to cover the immigration services and USCIS fees.

Not having the funds to cover these costs prevents people from having a stable life in the USA. It takes away their dignity and they are always in fear of what may happen to them or their family. Having access to legal immigration services is as important as having food on our table and a roof over our head. This is why I support HB 2957 and ask that you vote in favor of HB 2957.

Thank you,

Salomon