

COURTNEY NERON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 26



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Testimony in Support of HB 2951

May 18, 2023

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Boshart Davis, and members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Oregon's Spanish-speaking community members face barriers when they are trying to obtain driver's licenses, including poorly translated driving test questions and inaccessible training opportunities. According to the Criminal Justice Commission, several police agencies in Oregon have disproportionate levels of citations, arrests and/or searches of Latino drivers, including: the Oregon State Police, Washington County, Forest Grove, Hillsboro, and many others.

The opportunity to enroll in linguistically appropriate drivers education courses does not exist for most Oregonians who speak Spanish as their primary language. The Oregon Department of Transportation reports that, the rate of test failure for people who took the test in Spanish drivers was 22% higher than the rate of test failure for those who took the test in English owing to poorly translated driving test questions. We know that access to driver's education and higher rates of licensed drivers make our roads safer. All Oregonians deserve to have access to learn the rules and stay safe on the road.

Centro Cultural is the oldest culturally-specific Latinx organization in Oregon. They have been providing services to underserved communities in Washington County for over 50 years and have built trust and community with the Latinx and immigrant community. They are well-equipped and stand ready to meet the need for Spanish language driver education. HB 2951 would close that gap and establish funding for a Washington County program that could serve as a model for programs in other communities throughout the state.

By investing in equitable access to driver education courses, Oregon will improve safety on our roads and address barriers that lead to disproportionate levels of citations, arrests and/or searches of Latino drivers.

Thank you for your consideration of the pilot program in the [-1 amendment](#) and for supporting equitable access to drivers education. I urge your support and passage of [HB 2915](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Neron". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rep Courtney Neron

House District 26

Wilsonville, including the Charbonneau district, King City, Sherwood,
Tigard/Bull Mountain, and Parrett Mountain