

Submitter: Sara Zaccari

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure: SB1532

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and Members of the Committee,

SB 1532

IN SUPPORT

My name is Sara Zaccari, I am the School Enrollment Coordinator with Salem for Refugees.

Salem for Refugees is an affiliate of World Relief, an international refugee resettlement

organization, welcoming more than 250 refugees annually into the Salem community.

Roughly

half of the individuals SFR welcomes are children and youth who enter into the Salem-Keizer

Public Schools system. In partnership with Salem community members and organizations, SFR

provides newly arrived individuals and families with core services, connecting them to employment, healthcare, housing, transportation and education resources which embolden our

refugee new neighbors to be thriving and contributing members of our community. I am

testifying in favor of SB 1532 and the expanded services and resources it will provide to newly

arrived refugee, asylee and immigrant student success.

When refugees arrive in Oregon they are faced with many obstacles including language

barriers, lack of transportation, and significant cultural differences, to name a few.

Many of the

children and youth have experienced extended gaps in their education due to unstable and

uncertain living conditions. I work alongside teachers, Community School Outreach Coordinators and other district staff who serve our newcomer refugee students and are honored

to be tasked with bringing these students up to speed in academics, language, and cultural and

social connection. The needs of newcomer students are complex and require services and

resources outside of what any other student population requires for their success. With the passing of SB 1532, services and resources like teacher and staff training, translation services, wrap-around resources, outreach, trust-building and partnerships with CBOs can be expanded to meet the unique needs of refugee, asylee and immigrant students, and their families, encouraging Student Success. For these reasons, SFR strongly supports the passing of SB 1532 and urges this Committee to support SB 1532 with us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sara Zaccari, School Enrollment Coordinator, Salem for Refugees