



# LatinoNetwork

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Joint Subcommittee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. For the record, my name is Tony DeFalco, and I am the Executive Director of Latino Network.

Latino Network is a culturally-specific nonprofit serving Latinx youth and families in Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington counties. Our organization provides transformative services to over 8,000 Latinx youth, families, and community members in multiple areas including education, family stability, housing support, and advocacy.

Over the past several years, Latino Network has conducted an extensive capital campaign for the building of La Plaza Esperanza, a preschool and community center for East Multnomah County's Latinx population. East Multnomah County is home to more than 50,000 Latinx residents that don't have access to many critical culturally specific services related to preschool, educational supports, housing stability, healthcare, and legal services. Situated in the heart of the Rockwood neighborhood, La Plaza Esperanza fills that gap and serves as a safe space for members of our community to gather and access services in a setting that is comfortable and familiar to them.

The capital campaign has involved a significant braiding of public, private, and philanthropic funding. In the 2023 legislative session, Latino Network received \$4 million in Lottery Backed Bonds to allow for the construction of our project to conclude. We are incredibly grateful to the Legislature for making this appropriation.

Unfortunately, the timing of the originally scheduled bond sale will come after the projected open date of La Plaza Esperanza. We are now aware that a bond sale is planned to occur in the spring of 2024.

**Switching the date of our previously appropriated Lottery Backed Bond appropriation to the spring 2024 sale will allow us to use these previously allocated funds to the conclusion of this important project and campaign. It is important to note that this request is NOT for additional funds, just to change the date of the previously identified bond sale.**

We urge the Legislature to include such a change in the end-of-session budget materials. Thank you for your consideration.