

Submitter: Diana Meisenhelter
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB703

Dear Committee members,

The demonization of immigrant populations that is taking place across our country is abhorrent. Unless you are native indigenous, all of us are immigrants. Immigrants have built and continue to build this country, often doing the hardest and most dangerous physical labor and being in a position where they are often exploited. I urge you to support SB 703 as approximately one-third of immigrants in our state are eligible for a more secure status and are either unaware or don't have the legal fees to protect themselves. Expanding funding for low income individuals and families to provide legal support and amending state policy to help adjust their immigration status will save thousands from deportation and the cruelty of separating families. Many immigrants contribute greatly to our economy and have fled horrific situations where their return might even cost them their lives. Working in public schools, I was able to get to know many families first hand and witness the hardships they had and their resilience in trying to provide security and resources for their families. They are some of the hardest working, most humble, and generous folks I have ever known and my heart breaks when I hear the cruelty of the untruths being said about them. We need to do all within our power to push back against injustice and with the values we hold here in Oregon to support human rights and dignity. Please act both in support of these families, but also in support of our own economic self-interest and provide needed legal protections for those eligible. Thanks for your time and consideration. Diana Meisenhelter