



**JAPANESE AMERICAN
MUSEUM OF OREGON**

411 NW Flanders Street
Portland, Oregon 97209

503-224-1458

March 18, 2025

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon (JAMO), Japanese Ancestral Society of Portland (JAS), Portland Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), and the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project (MYLP), we want to express our deep support for the SB 703/HB 2788 bill. Our institutions work within the Japanese American community where historically, there was no pathway to citizenship for our immigrant ancestors due to institutionalized racism. This was solidified in policy, preventing most Asian immigrants from becoming naturalized citizens until 1952, where the Immigration and Nationality Act ended the exclusion of Asians immigrating to the United States.

Our ancestors immigrated to the United States in the late 1800's and early 1900's to follow their American Dream. They wanted to feel safe and contribute to the nation. Many of the Japanese immigrants in Oregon started off in the agricultural or forestry industries, providing necessary work to contribute to the United States' economy; all the while trying to make a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities, just like many of the immigrants today.

The immigration filing process can be cost prohibitive for most people trying to apply, let alone the cost for seeking legal services. SB 703 will help alleviate these monetary and legal service barriers to help immigrants in Oregon to seek a legal pathway towards citizenship through nonprofit legal service providers.

The Japanese American Museum of Oregon, Japanese Ancestral Society, and the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project wholeheartedly supports this bill. Oregon needs to find opportunities to help people who are trying to make a positive impact on our state and support them in legal residency status so they can feel safe and contribute meaningfully to our society.

We appreciate this opportunity to support SB 703. Thank you so much for understanding how this bill will benefit our community.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Handwritten signature of Hanako Wakatsuki in black ink.

Hanako Wakatsuki
Exec. Dir., JAMO

Handwritten signature of Peggy Nagae in black ink.

Peggy Nagae
Co-Founder, MYLP

Handwritten signature of Rich Iwasaki in black ink.

Rich Iwasaki
Pres., JAS

Handwritten signature of Jeff Matsumoto in black ink.

Jeff Matsumoto
Pres., JACL