



March 19, 2025

Senator Floyd Prozanski
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St NE, S-407
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for Senate Bill 703

Chair Prozanski Vice-Chair Thatcher and members of the committee

My Name is Rebekah Markillie and I am writing on behalf of the Oregon Housing Alliance to ask your support of SB 703/HB 2788 Pathways to Protection and Citizenship. SB 703 allocates money to the Department of Human Services to award grants to nonprofit legal service providers that cover the cost of clients legal services.

This is a bill that will save and strengthen families, improve outcomes in ODHS programs, bolster our workforce, and strengthen the general fund by helping immigrants transition from state services like Healthier Oregon to OHP.

Up to 1/3 of Oregonians without an immigration status are actually eligible under federal law for an immigration status. That is over 25,000 Oregonians who, but for the high cost of legal services, are living in fear, out of the employment mainstream, and unable to support their families. Immigrant and refugee communities make up more than 13% of our state's workforce, yet legal costs prevent many Oregonians from obtaining a more secure immigration status.

The Oregon Housing Alliance is a statewide coalition of over 100 member organizations, including tenant organizations; affordable housing developers and operators; social service providers and shelter operators; Community Action Agencies; Public Housing Authorities; housing industry businesses and professionals; city and county governments; and community-based nonprofits and advocacy groups. Many of our members are within the community land trust ecosystem and organizations that are committed to expanding homeownership opportunities across the state.

Our diverse membership is united by the belief that every Oregonian deserves a home that is affordable, stable, accessible and safe. To this end, we urge your support of SB 703.

Thank you for your time and for standing with all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

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

Rebekah Markillie
Oregon Housing Alliance
rmarkillie@neighborhoodpartnerships.org