

Submitter: Joanne Mina
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB703

Chair Prozanski Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

My Name is Joanne Mina, and I am a small business owner from Deschutes County. I 100% support SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship, because of its transparency and accountability via ODHS, the community focus, and its needed contribution to the current landscape.

This bill came before you as HB 4085 in 2024, and passed this Committee unanimously. HB 2788/ SB703 is a bill that will save and strengthen families, improve outcomes in other DHS programs, bolster our workforce and strengthen Oregon's general fund.

Up to 1/3 of Oregonians without an immigration status are actually eligible under federal law for an immigration status. That is thousands of Oregonians who, but for a few hundred dollars, are living in fear, out of the employment mainstream, 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. This bill's one-time support of Oregonians to offset these legal costs will stabilize our workforce.

In the workshops and focus groups I offer I see countless stories of heartbreak due to lack of information and legal support. The Oregon Legislature can drastically change the lives of thousands of Oregonians and their families positively by voting YES on SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship.

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

Joanne Mina
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