

3/20/2025

Yes to SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship Act

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

My Name is Iván Hernández and I live in Portland, Oregon in Washington county.

I enthusiastically support SB 703/HB 2788, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship. This bill came before you as HB 4085 in 2024, and passed this Committee unanimously. HB 2788/ SB 703 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.

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

Sincerely,
Iván Hernández