

Submitter: Jennifer Chaney

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB703

Honorable Chair Prozanski and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

I'm proud to live in Oregon, a sanctuary state, because it stands for safety, dignity and human rights for all of its residents. Since the Trump administration's extreme actions on immigration policy, the anti-immigrant rhetoric and the de-humanizing tactics to make lives unstable for those who hold legal immigration status; these human rights are now in serious jeopardy, even in Oregon.

I am writing in support of SB 703, providing grants to nonprofits to help immigrants improve their legal status. Many people who would want to improve their status are hindered by the cost this would entail. This bill rightly seeks to make the documentation process of legally changing one's immigration status more achievable for immigrants in our state.

I am an instructor in two community colleges and a substitute teacher at the local elementary school where I see many students who are first generation American citizens, born to immigrants, who add culture, expanded community and a broader life experience to the classroom. I have seen firsthand how hard these immigrants work and contribute to the Oregon economic landscape. There are many good reasons to raise the experience of immigrant families, many of whom have been working, raising their children and paying taxes in this state for many, many years. SB 703 raises the opportunity for these members of our community to carry out their lives as any other person in the state is privileged to do. Helping families to stabilize their lives through proper documentation will have benefits beyond their immediate selves, creating more productive conditions for business and commerce in the state through a more secure, dependable workforce, a workforce that has become essential to our state economy.

I strongly urge you to support SB 703. Thank you.