



# CENTRO

Date: March 21, 2025

To: Senate Committee On Judiciary

From: Nansi López, Policy Director for Centro Cultural

Re: SB 703, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship Act.

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

My name is Nansi López, Policy Director for Centro Cultural. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 703, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship Act.

Centro Cultural is the oldest and longest-serving Latino culturally-specific organization in Oregon. Centro was founded 50 years ago by 14 migrant families who believed in creating a vibrant and cohesive society that is shared, valued, and open for community members from different ethnicities and backgrounds. Centro has served as a safe place for our local Latino community, low-income migrant farmworkers, immigrant refugee communities, and all who come to our doors. Our mission is to be a home for Latino cultures, serving the needs of our diverse community by promoting personal growth and empowerment. To create lasting change for families of color and low-income individuals, stimulate systems change, and work with key stakeholders to reduce barriers and provide essential resources and services for the families we serve.

Senate Bill 703, Pathways to Protection and Citizenship Act, would assist many immigrants seeking immigration legal services to obtain or change a lawful permanent status. Senate Bill 703 is important because of the challenges immigrants face in struggling to pay immigration attorneys and USCIS filing fees.

Immigrants are not just residents, but integral contributors to Oregon's robust economy. The pathway to US Citizenship is indeed costly, but providing a less burdensome pathway can pave the way for these valuable individuals to further contribute to our prosperity.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 703 to ensure access to immigration legal services.

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