

Submitter: jules LIPANDA  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: 2026 Agency Reduction Options

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jules Lipanda. I am a former refugee from the Democratic Republic of Congo and currently serve as a Case Manager at Salem for Refugees. In my role, I support newly arrived families with housing, food access, healthcare, and other daily needs. Having come to the United States as a refugee myself, this work is both professional and deeply personal to me.

Many of the families we serve are already experiencing harm due to SNAP benefit losses and may face additional, immediate challenges because of Operation PARRIS. These disruptions directly affect their ability to put food on the table and maintain stability. It is crucial that decision-makers hear directly from staff and New Neighbors about what these changes mean in real life.

I respectfully urge your support for dedicated Emergency Response funding that would allow community organizations to provide short-term assistance for basic needs such as rent, food, and utilities during times of instability. This flexible support is essential to helping families avoid homelessness and the long-term challenges that can follow.

I also kindly ask the legislature to maintain funding for the Extended Case Management Program and protect current service eligibility. Families already receiving support should not lose access because of future changes in federal status beyond their control.

Oregon's communities have worked diligently to create welcoming, stable environments for refugees. At this critical moment, refugees need the state's support to address the challenges they are facing and ensure that fear or policy changes do not undermine years of successful integration. We appreciate your leadership in standing with refugee families and helping them build safe, stable lives