

Department of County Human Services



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204 SW 4th Avenue
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February 4, 2026

Senate Committee on the Judiciary
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Senate Bill 1594

Dear Senator Jama, cosponsors and Senate Committee on the Judiciary:

On behalf of the Multnomah County Department of County Human Services, I am writing to express support for Senate Bill 1594.

By allowing Oregon's Office for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement to create model policies that all local governments statewide may access and use, this bill will help make our state's sanctuary policies more relevant, practical, consistent and effective. This will help our cities, counties and other local jurisdictions across Oregon to better understand and implement sanctuary policies that keep our immigrant and refugee neighbors, friends and colleagues safe.

By declaring an emergency, this bill highlights how serious the impact of recent actions by federal agencies such as ICE in Oregon have been, and how important it is that Oregon stand by its sanctuary promise. Since a number of immigrant families we serve have been severely financially impacted by the recent detention of a male breadwinner, and some could even face homelessness as a result, we hope this emergency declaration at the state level may invoke the release of additional funds, and/or the creation of additional flexibility for the use of existing funds or relatable resources.

The declaration of an emergency in this bill also underlines how urgent the need for Oregon public servants to make the sanctuary promise a reality is right now. Our colleagues at the Immigration Law Lab and Equity Corps of Oregon and journalists have reported a surge in detentions in late 2025 and early 2026. What's more, federal immigration agents with ICE and CBP stand accused of ignoring the U.S. Constitution and committing violations of law and due process, including:

- allegedly arresting and detaining a 17-year-old U.S. citizen from McMinnville
- allegedly racially profiling immigrants based on the color of their skin
- allegedly denying due process to a wildland firefighter from Keizer
- allegedly detaining a family of three asylum seekers while seeking medical care
- allegedly carrying out warrantless arrests

How should Multnomah County DCHS and others respond? How can we provide services for the County's 111,000 immigrants while prioritizing safety and peace?

Model policies, statewide data or research and other information from OIRA could be very useful for our work. While we have developed and posted our own guidance at County buildings, having additional model policies and guidance from OIRA would be helpful for us as well as smaller jurisdictions.

Currently, there is not a consistent, state-recommended set of model policies, rules or guidance for local jurisdictions within Oregon, for how to respond if federal agents from ICE or CBP or others show up at local offices or buildings. There is also not a centralized hub or location for data on Oregon's diverse immigrants.

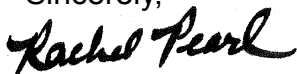
This can lead to confusion and gaps in local cities, counties and school districts' ability to understand, share and act upon Oregon's sanctuary laws, which have been in place since 1987, and the Sanctuary Promise law passed in 2021.

By helping Oregon's local governments become more consistent in their standards, policies and procedures relating to federal immigration enforcement agencies, this bill may provide more equity broadly for all of Oregon's immigrants. It may have the effect of making sanctuary laws more straightforward, functional and consistent across levels of local government and Oregon's geographic areas, thereby helping to make it more likely that immigrants and refugees utilize the full benefit of Oregon's sanctuary laws.

Immigrant and refugee clients of DCHS programs may feel a greater sense of safety in accessing offices and spaces, and staff who are themselves immigrants may also feel a greater sense of safety and support.

Multnomah County strongly urges you to pass HB 4123. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony and for your service to Oregon communities.

Sincerely,



Rachel Pearl

Interim Department Director

Multnomah County Department of County Human Services