

Submitter: ALMA SC  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4117  
TO: House Judiciary Committee  
SUBJECT: In Support of Universal Representation HB 4117

My name is Alma, and I have lived in Washington County for over 20 years. I am a mother of three children, I work in this county, and I do my shopping and live my daily life right here. My family and I are active members of this community.

I am writing this testimony to express my support for the Universal Representation proposal, HB 4117, because it is an urgent need for our community.

Unfortunately, for more than a year, the community has been targeted by violent and illegal raids by ICE, simply because of their skin color, which has caused deep and constant fear. These actions have severely affected children, young people, and adults, sowing terror in our communities.

My children, who are U.S. citizens, are afraid to go to school and to come home. They live with the fear of not finding their father or me when they return, for fear of an arrest. This situation is affecting them emotionally and also in their school performance. Although they were born in this country, they feel that their own country is failing them by allowing growing hatred and racism towards their parents and towards people who look like them.

In previous years, my children had clear goals: to study, to excel, and to become responsible individuals. That is what we have taught them as parents. Today, that enthusiasm has been replaced by fear. They are no longer only worried about learning, but about the safety of their family and their community.

Immigrants are hardworking people; we contribute every day to making Oregon a stronger, more humane, and beautiful place. We are a community that cares for and protects one another. No one deserves to live with constant fear, mental stress, or the fear of being arrested, beaten, or harmed. Many people are no longer going to work for fear of being detained, which leaves them even more vulnerable, unable to pay rent, buy food, or cover their families' basic needs. Our community does not deserve to live this way.

The HB 417 proposal would bring real and necessary benefits.

If this proposal is approved, families will receive legal support during extremely difficult times, when they need it most. People will not have to face such a complex and frightening legal process alone.

For our children and young people, this would mean an alleviated peace of mind and hope. Knowing that their parents have the support of a lawyer would give them security, allow them to focus on their studies, and feel supported by the system that should protect them .

Furthermore, I am part of a non-profit organization “Adelante Mujeres”, and every day we receive calls from desperate families seeking legal aid, support from lawyers, and mental health services. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient funds to meet the enormous need that exists.

For all these reasons, I respectfully ask you to support the HB 4117 proposal. Legal representation is vital to protect working families and to defend the dignity and human rights of our community.

This is an urgent need. We hope to count on your support.

Sincerely,

ALMA  
Resident of Washington County