

Submitter: Devon Lawson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4117  
Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Devon Lawson. I am testifying today in strong support of HB 4117.

This bill is not just about immigration policy; it is about the fundamental integrity of our legal system and the economic stability of our working class.

We pride ourselves on a legal system based on due process. But in immigration court, the government is always represented by a trained prosecutor, while the immigrant, often facing a complex, life-altering legal battle, is often left alone. That is not justice; that is an assembly line. HB 4117 ensures that the "adversarial system" actually functions. When both sides have lawyers, the law is applied correctly, the courts run more efficiently, and we avoid the tyranny of unchecked government power. If we believe in the Constitution, we must believe in the right to counsel.

The deportation machine targets the most vulnerable members of our workforce; the people who harvest our food and build our homes. By appropriating \$10 million to the Universal Representation Fund, we are building a shield for these families. We are saying that in Oregon, you will not face the federal government alone. This is a direct investment in keeping families together and workers in their jobs.

When a provider is deported, a family is thrown into crisis, often requiring emergency state services. When a worker is defended and remains in the workforce, they continue to contribute to our economy and tax base. The \$10 million investment in Oregon Worker Relief is a fraction of the cost we would pay in lost economic productivity and social services if these thousands of neighbors were deported.

This bill upholds our values of fairness, protects our economy, and ensures that the scales of justice are balanced. I urge you to vote Yes.

Thank you.