

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

The Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs (OCHA), writes to express our strong support for the Law Enforcement Accountability and Visibility Act (LEAVA). OCHA's mission is to work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal, and political equality for Hispanics in Oregon. As a statutory state commission advising policymakers on issues affecting our communities, we recognize LEAVA as essential legislation to protect the civil rights and safety of all Oregonians, including Oregon's Hispanic communities.

The recent deployment of masked federal agents conducting enforcement operations across Oregon raises serious concerns about accountability, transparency, and due process. When law enforcement officers operate anonymously without clear identification, it creates an environment ripe for abuse, racial profiling, and violations of constitutional rights. Hispanic communities have a long history of being targeted by discriminatory immigration enforcement and profiling based on perceived foreign status, regardless of actual citizenship or immigration status.

LEAVA addresses these critical concerns through several key provisions:

- **Accountability Through Identification:** By generally prohibiting masks on law enforcement during operations, this bill ensures that Oregonians know who is detaining them. This basic accountability measure is fundamental to preventing abuse and ensuring officers act within the bounds of the law.
- **Firewall Protections:** Creating separation between public employees and federal immigration enforcement protects the trust between immigrant communities and essential state services. Families must be able to access healthcare, education, and public safety services without fear that state employees will facilitate federal immigration enforcement.
- **Transparency Requirements:** Increased public transparency into joint federal task forces and requirements for future agreements protect the rights of all Oregonians by ensuring these operations are subject to appropriate oversight and public scrutiny.

The need for these protections is particularly urgent for Hispanic Oregonians as they represent a uniquely targeted community. Historical and ongoing patterns of discrimination have shown that when enforcement agencies operate without accountability, communities of color bear the brunt of civil rights violations.

From the Bracero Program era and the mass incarceration era during the Cold War to contemporary immigration enforcement that disproportionately targets Hispanic immigrant communities, our communities understand the dangers of unchecked enforcement power firsthand.

LEAVA protects all Oregonians by establishing clear standards for law enforcement conduct. These protections benefit not only immigrant communities but every resident who deserves to



know that officers operating in their neighborhoods are identifiable, accountable, and subject to appropriate oversight.

OCHA urges the Oregon Legislative Assembly to pass the Law Enforcement Accountability and Visibility Act. This legislation represents a critical step toward ensuring that all enforcement operations in Oregon are conducted with transparency, accountability, and respect for the constitutional rights of all residents.

We stand ready to provide additional input and support as this important legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

The Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs





