



SB 599 - Testimony for Fair Housing for All

March 5th, 2025

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. For the record, my name is Hannah Alzgal and I am the Housing Justice Policy Coordinator at Unite Oregon. We are led by people of color, immigrants, refugees, rural communities, and people experiencing poverty, building towards a unified movement for justice. I speak on behalf of our members when I urge you to support SB 599, ensuring that all Oregonians have fair access to housing, regardless of their immigration status.

We have chapters in Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas counties, and the Rogue Valley. In every one of our chapters, housing and racial justice has been a priority. We hear firsthand from immigrant community members who live in fear of being exploited by landlords or retaliated against for speaking up about unmaintained and unsafe living conditions, difficulty justifying rent increases, and unfair rental agreements. Many worry about the risks of renting for the first time or relocating, knowing that they may face discrimination due to status. While we understand there is an ongoing effort to provide best practices and education on this, expanding the Landlord-Tenant Act to include protections for immigrants sends a message of security and safety to our members as a sanctuary state.

These protections are crucial for those who contribute to the state's economy, pay taxes, and have the financial means to access housing. Without clear protections against discrimination, we risk pushing these individuals further into housing insecurity. This bill provides the reassurance that fair housing is a guaranteed right for all Oregonians and that this right is supported by our state's lawmakers.

Someone's immigration status is irrelevant when determining a person's ability to be a responsible tenant. Potential renters—whether immigrant or not—must still demonstrate their reliability and ability to comply with the conditions of their lease, meaning their application should be fairly considered alongside all other prospective tenants.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to support SB 599, ensuring fair access to housing for every Oregonian, regardless of immigration status.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Hannah Alzgal
Housing Justice Policy Coordinator
Unite Oregon