

Submitter: Sharon Hawks
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB599

Honorable Chair Prozanski and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary. I am writing to you in support of Senate Bill 599 which prohibits Oregon landlords from asking tenants about their legal status. At the same time landlords would not be permitted to disclose a tenant's legal status or reject an applicant's status on the basis of their immigration status.

As a result of the Trump administration's actions, many people in our state are now living in enormous fear for themselves, family members, co-workers and neighbors. I often see immigrants starting businesses and working on crews and in daycare centers in my neighborhood. They are my neighbors. They typically work hard, send their children to school, pay taxes and contribute to our community. They are truly Oregonians and deserve the same dignity and respect as any others.

Oregon has been a sanctuary state since 1987 when the Oregon Legislature said that Oregon stands for the safety, dignity, and human rights of all people living within our borders. I am in full support of this bill to protect these rights and the right of individual privacy. A person's legal status is private, and landlords would not ask a similarly private question of non-immigrants. This kind of question to an immigrant is similar to profiling, and being forced to disclose one's immigration status could possibly result in very dire consequences for them or for family.

I strongly encourage you to vote yes to promote this bill out of committee and onto the floor for a vote by the full Senate.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Sharon Hawks