



# Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

February 6, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Prozanski, Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Lauren Herbert, MD  
Representing the Oregon Pediatric Society

SUBJECT: Support for Senate Bill 1543, Universal Representation

My name is Dr. Lauren Herbert. I am a pediatrician in Springfield, Oregon and a member of the Oregon Pediatric Society. I speak Spanish fluently and almost all of my patients are children of immigrants from Latin America. I write in support of SB 1543, which would provide universal legal representation for people involved in deportation proceedings.

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Our membership is committed to improving and protecting the health and well-being of all children in Oregon, as well as supporting those who care for them. OPS supports SB 1543 to protect children and their families.

In Oregon, one in ten children has an undocumented parent. Deportation of a parent has been shown to have adverse effects on the family members left behind. Not only is there economic hardship, housing instability and food insecurity, but children suffer emotionally. (<https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12256>).

In my clinic, I have seen the effects on several families when one parent was deported. One example is a father of four who was deported and unable to afford legal representation. His wife, a US citizen who is legally blind, could no longer pay rent and moved in with her sister and the sister's family. Eventually the mother made the agonizing decision to leave her extended family behind so that the children could grow up with both parents in the same household. They have returned to the country as adolescents, but are behind their cousins academically and in speaking English as a second language.

I urge you to vote yes on SB 1543 to keep families intact and improve the well-being of the children.