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Testimony in Support of HB 3525
Monday, April 13, 2015
House Committee on Judiciary

OR Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs
Stephen Ying, Chair
Mari Watanabe, Vice Chair
Legislative Liaisons:
Sen. Michael Dembrow
Rep. Gene Whisnant

OR Commission on Black Affairs
James I. Manning Jr., Chair
James Morris, Vice Chair
Legislative Liaisons:
Sen. Rod Monroe
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OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs
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Sen. Laurie Monnes Anderson
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Staff
Lucy Baker, Administrator
Nancy Kramer, Executive Assistant

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Olson and Williamson, and Representatives Barton, Greenlick, Krieger, Lininger, Post, and Sprenger,

The Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs and Hispanic Affairs support HB 3525. This bill addresses a serious issue in our community – that of unlicensed non-lawyer "immigration consultants" (often referred to as "notarios") which prey on certain members of the public. Unlicensed immigration consultants are already prohibited under ORS 9.280. Some notarios use coercion and extortion to discourage members of the public from reporting them for their illegal practices. HB 3525 addresses this problem by providing that using intimidation or fear to prevent a person from reporting violations of ORS 9.280 is a Class A misdemeanor.

HB 3525 gives law enforcement a tool to investigate, charge, and prosecute egregious violations of Oregon's unlawful practice of law statute. It also encourages victims of those crimes to feel comfortable meeting with law enforcement.

This legislation is the product of a workgroup involving the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs, representatives of the Oregon Department of Justice, the Oregon Chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and the Human Trafficking Unit of Multnomah County Sheriff's Office.

We urge passage of this bill to help our community and the state as a whole.

Stephen Ying, OCAPIA Chair

Alberto Moreno, OCHA Chair