Kate Brown
Governor

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Testimony in Support of HB 4128
February 8, 2016, Hearing Room 343, 3pm
House Judiciary Committee

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Lininger and Olson, and Members of the Judiciary Committee,

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions supports HB 4128. 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, but right now, when someone applies for a notary public license, the Secretary of State has no discretion to deny it. Likewise, there are few tools for prosecutors to use to indict and bring to trial individuals who have violated the public's trust by pretending to be a fully licensed notario or the equivalent of an immigration consultant.

HB 4128 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, the Oregon State Bar, the Secretary of State's office, 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.

Mari Watanabe
OCAPIA Chair

James I. Manning
OCBA Chair

Alberto Moreno
OCHA Chair

Dr. Barbara Spencer
OCFW Chair

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