



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

State Capitol
Oregon State Legislature

PRESS RELEASE

March 28, 2022

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Governor Signs Bill to Make Oregon's Laws More Inclusive

Senate Bill 1560 will replace "alien" with "noncitizen" in Oregon Revised Statutes

SALEM – Last Thursday, March 24, Governor Kate Brown signed [Senate Bill 1560](#) into law. This legislation changes the term "alien" to "noncitizen" in Oregon's code of laws, formally known as Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS). The bill also directs executive branch agencies to replace "alien" with "noncitizen" in their rules and regulations within six months of enactment. Senate Bill 1560 passed through the Legislature with strong bipartisan support in both chambers.

"Referring to immigrants and refugees as 'aliens' is an outdated, dehumanizing practice that stems from xenophobia and allows individuals to express bigotry without using overt racist language," said [Senator Kayse Jama](#) (D-Portland), Co-Chief Sponsor of Senate Bill 1560, who introduced the measure for consideration during the 2022 Legislative Session. "As a former refugee, who was once classified as an 'alien,' I am proud that the Legislature voted to update our laws to reflect our values. I hope we can serve as a model for other states."

"In Oregon, we welcome immigrants and refugees from around the world, recognizing that these communities are a vital part of the fabric of Oregon's history, culture, and economy," said [Governor Kate Brown](#). "I am pleased we are making progress through efforts like the Welcoming Refugees Bill, the creation of the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement and now, removing a dangerous label from our lexicon through SB 1560. Words matter, and I applaud Senator Jama and all Oregonians who worked to make this important change."

"We are delighted that Governor Brown signed SB 1560. This bill makes a small change that has a huge impact on peoples' lives. Updating our states' statutory language is a critical step to ensure that immigrant and refugee Oregonians are treated with dignity and respect," said Isa Peña, Director of Strategy, Innovation Law Lab, who also testified in supported of the bill. "This law ensures that our language is aligned with our values and is no longer dehumanizing and derogatory."

Senate Bill 1560 takes effect on January 1, 2023.

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