



Demonstrators at the Oregonians for Immigration Reform event in Salem, April 8.

PHOTO BY JOE GLODE

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hiding behind environmental values.” For example, she said, its argument that Oregon has “unsustainable levels of immigration.”

“The newly-formed Environmental Committee,” said Joel Iboa in the hours leading up to the demonstration, “is stepping forward. They are allies turning into accomplices.”

Iboa works for Causa, Oregon’s largest immigrant rights advocacy group, and is also the One Oregon coalition coordinator. He said organizers also put the call out for faith-based organizations and racial justice groups to attend the protest at the Best Western.

Best Western did not respond to an inquiry about its policies regarding hosting hate groups by press time.

Armed guards in uniforms, who were not local law enforcement, stood at the door and in the lobby of the Salem Best Western. The front desk told Street Roots they were hotel night security called in due to the protesters, but that does not explain why one was wearing a hat that read “Patriot.” The guards also popped in and out of the Oregonians for Immigration Reform meeting, and were present in the lobby long after the protesters left the area.

Vaughan had been invited to speak to Oregonians for Immigration Reform about sanctuary policies and Trump’s immigration policies.

She told a hotel conference room full of what appeared to be mainly retirees, that several people now working in the White House have been working with her organization for years, and that they are successfully pushing anti-immigrant policies.

She spoke about several bills she said were in the works in Washington, D.C., that would limit refugees to 50,000 per year, severely limit family sponsorship of immigration and cut back on who can earn green cards. When she mentioned a bill that would make E-Verify, an online system for verifying legal ability to work in the U.S., universal, the room erupted in applause.

Vaughan spoke at length at the Best Western about how her group and allies in D.C. are pushing back on sanctuary cities.

In December she co-authored a report that aimed to show how claims sanctuary jurisdictions make are “largely unfounded.”

One key finding, stated the report, was that, “Cooperation with immigration enforcement has not

been shown to undermine community trust nor cause immigrants to refrain from reporting crime.

We asked local law enforcement if this finding aligned with the experience of their departments.

Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office spokesperson Lt. Chad Gaidos indicated this argument couldn’t be further from the truth.

“Since November, Sheriff Reese and his command staff have attended numerous community meetings where immigrants have personally expressed a reluctance to call law enforcement to report crime for fear of deportation,” he told Street Roots. “In addition, presiding court judges in both Multnomah and Washington counties have expressed seeing a decline in the number of people who are participating in court processes, to include both victims and witnesses. This hampers the effectiveness of our court to provide due process, and accountability,” he said. “Not reporting crime in our community makes us all less safe.”

Portland Police Bureau spokesperson Sgt. Pete Simpson did not agree with this finding either.

“We know that many of our immigrant and refugee community members come from places where there is a deep-rooted distrust of law enforcement. We work very hard to help gain their trust through outreach and community engagement,” he said. “Part of that is explaining that local law enforcement is not immigration enforcement.”

According to Center for New Community, a Chicago-based organization that tracks “organized bigotry,” nativists across the country have shown increasing interest in Oregon and efforts to pass anti-immigrant laws in the state, in part due to the low barrier to qualify for a ballot measure.

A report it released on Oregonians for Immigration Reform highlighted the group’s links to hate groups and its dependence on financial assistance from white nationalists.

The report states, “Nativist victories in Oregon can be used to build momentum for the anti-immigrant movement around the country.”

And it is.

Vaughan told her Oregon audience that she often encourages immigration reform groups in other states by telling them about how in Oregon, Oregonians for Immigration Reform beat a measure to give drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants.

“If it can be done in Oregon,” she said, “it can be

## fact vs fiction

Being in the United States unlawfully is a crime.

Not necessarily. Being here unlawfully – such as having expired documents – isn’t a felony, or even a misdemeanor. It’s considered a **civil violation**, punishable by deportation and possibly a re-entry gap. It’s tantamount to getting a parking ticket, according to Illya Shapira with the Cato Institute, who told Politifact, “You don’t go to jail or receive any other criminal punishment for being in the country illegally – you get deported.” According to FindLaw, simply being unlawfully present is not grounds for incarceration or criminal charges. And even entering the country illegally is merely a misdemeanor under federal criminal law.

Undocumented or illegal immigrants don’t pay into the system with taxes and are a drain on social services.

The National Academy of Sciences has studied this at length, and found that, like for all people, the impact is based on a long list of variables, including age. The NAS found that, “in fact, most immigrants tend to arrive at young working ages, which partly explains why the **net fiscal impact of immigration is positive** under most scenarios.

For example, under one set of plausible assumptions, the net present value of the fiscal impact of an immigrant with less than a high school education is -\$13,000; in contrast, the net present value for an immigrant with more than a high school education is +\$198,000,” according to the NAS.

And yes, even illegal immigrants pay taxes at the federal, state and local level, even though they are not eligible for many of those benefits, such as Social Security.

Illegal immigrant populations are havens for terrorists.

According to The Cato Institute, the chance of an American being murdered in a terrorist attack caused by a refugee is 1 in 3.64 billion per year while the chance of being murdered in an attack committed by an illegal immigrant is an astronomical 1 in 10.9 billion per year. By contrast, the chance of being murdered by a tourist on a B visa, the most common tourist visa, is 1 in 3.9 million per year. “Only 10 illegal immigrants became terrorists, a minuscule 0.000038 percent of the 26.5 million who entered from 1975 through 2015. Only one of those illegal immigrants, Ahmed Ajaj, actually succeeded in killing an American as one of the 1993 World Trade Center conspirators. Meanwhile, as is often pointed out, **Dylann Roof**, the white supremacist who murdered nine people simply because they were black, wasn’t charged with terrorism.