

Misled by a canvasser, I signed the IP 22 petition

Jane Doe has been in personal contact with Street Roots on this issue. She is not using her real name to protect her father's employment. Doe is a Gresham resident and nonprofit professional.

BY JANE DOE
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

On the evening of Saturday, March 3, I visited the Gresham Fred Meyer to pick up some late night snacks. As I walked up to the doors, I was approached by two canvassers. The canvasser who approached me was holding a clipboard with a petition on colored paper, indicating that she was being paid to get signatures. It didn't have the name or the title of the initiative written on the paper but the woman explained that they were collecting signatures to put IP 22 on the ballot in November. According to her, IP 22 would give Oregonians the chance to protect our sanctuary state status by letting us vote to protect it. I didn't understand why putting sanctuary status to a vote would protect it, and I questioned her about why we would need to vote on a law that was already in place. I explained that ensuring that our sanctuary status remains in place was important to me. The canvasser explained that she too wanted to protect our sanctuary status and that IP 22 would do that. I asked her where Oregonians leaned on the issue and she said we generally support it. Satisfied with her answers, I signed the petition and did my shopping. When I was leaving, I asked her what group she was with, and she wasn't able to tell me.

I didn't think about it again until a few days later when I saw one of the news stories that Street Roots published about Ballot Access LLC and their canvassers fraudulently pushing IP 22 as sanctuary state protection initiative. I learned that the title of the ballot is actually "Repeals law limiting use of state/local law enforcement resources to enforce federal immigration laws." I was shocked to learn that these canvassers had completely deceived me and all of the other people they gathered signatures from that night at the Gresham Fred Meyer. I would never have signed the IP 22 petition if I had been informed of what it actually is because I have an vested

interest in maintaining sanctuary status: Both of my parents are undocumented.

My family's story echoes the thousands of stories that have been shared by brave Dreamers and other undocumented people in the past few years. My mom was born in the 1960s in a tiny village in England. My mom never knew her biological father and she didn't have a dad until my grandma married my grandpa, a U.S. Air Force serviceman who was stationed in England. He legally adopted my mom and they moved together to Germany, California and Texas with the Air Force. Right after my mom graduated from high school in Texas, my grandpa got stationed in England again to finish out his military career. Despite being an adult, my mom decided to move with her family to England after graduation and met my dad during that time. When my grandpa retired from the Air Force and moved the family back to the U.S., my mom stayed in England because she had fallen in love. Eventually, she got pregnant with me and she and my dad decided to move to the U.S. to be with my mom's family for the end of her pregnancy and the first few months of my life. They planned on staying for a year but ended up staying here to raise their family.

During their time here, my parents have worked, paid taxes, stayed out of legal trouble, and spent time and money in their community. They live in a conservative state with a lot of anti-immigrant rhetoric, but most of the time they are shielded from it because they are white, native English-speaking immigrants from a "good country." And hey, everyone loves an English accent, right?

My parents remained undocumented because they had issues finding legal documents. There was never a clear path for citizenship for them, and coming out now when my dad is so close to retirement would almost certainly mean that they would have to leave the country for a number of years before they could get a

green card.

Despite the privileges they experience being English immigrants, we have had plenty of scares. I knew from an early age that we had to keep my parents' immigration status a secret because telling the wrong people could get my parents in trouble. I was in kindergarten when my parents tried to explain to my younger brother and me what deportation was. I was 16 when my paternal grandfather died in England and we weren't sure that my dad would be able to get back into the country after attending the funeral. And I was 24 when a city bus hit my parents' car while my dad was driving. During this instance, we benefited from the sanctuary laws that we didn't know existed because the law enforcement officers who responded didn't question my dad about his immigration status even though he didn't have a driver's license and was clearly an immigrant.

Sanctuary laws protect immigrants who just want the best life for their families, whether that means reuniting with family members, escaping dangerous situations or simply exploring economic opportunities. Ballot Access LLC misled me and many other people into signing the IP 22 petition. When I tried calling the owner of Ballot Access LLC, Lee Vasche, I was forwarded to another phone number and my message hasn't been returned. That was March 8. The Attorney General's Office is taking complaints from people who were misled into signing the IP 22, and I encourage anyone who was deceived to file a complaint so we can continue to protect our immigrant neighbors.

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Growing Up

by Daniel Cox

The hustle and flow of streets,
Where your environment
Is life and death.

You start your game

When you wake and hope

Now is not your last,

Where you slip up and

It could be your end.

Will anyone send you flowers?

You get your street credits by action.

Not talking, just take them down.

My lifestyle, I had to take the fall,

Didn't say a thing, and was welcome

Back to the family that was my own.

people's
FOOD CO-OP

FARMERS' MARKET
WEDNESDAYS 2-7PM



UP TO \$10 MATCH WITH EBT CARD

We're passionate about helping our community access healthy food that they can trust. By shopping at our market, you'll get extra food dollars while supporting local farmers and community.

3029 SE 21st Ave. btwn Powell & Division