



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 2, 2013

Representative Jeff Barker, Chair
Members of the House Committee on Judiciary

Chair Barker and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Joseph Gallegos. I represent House District 30, which includes the Cities of Hillsboro and North Plains, and parts of unincorporated Washington County.

I am urging you to support Senate Bill 463-A, which relates to the impact of proposed legislation on minority populations in Oregon.

People of color are dramatically over-represented in Oregon's criminal justice and child welfare systems compared to the general population. These racial and ethnic disparities suggest that we are using state resources inefficiently and ineffectively. When it comes to our child welfare system, the over-representation of children of color can have a long lasting negative consequence on families and communities.

According to the Urban League of Portland, African American Children account for 8.3% of the foster care population. Native American Children comprise of 8.8% of the foster care population. Racial and impact statements are an excellent tool for gaining insight into how legislation might affect these disparities, much in the same way that a fiscal and revenue impact statements allow legislators to better understand the financial cost of a bill.

	Total Population	Total Population %*	% In Foster Care	% In OR Correction**
White	3,245,856	85%	64%	74%
Black	68,155	1.7%	2%	9%
Hispanic	436,806	11%	12%	13%
Native American	57,114	1.5%	2%	2%
Asian	139,258	3.6%	1.8%	1%

*% based on total state population of 3,801,991 via the 2007-2011 U.S. Census Bureau

**Based on state prison population of 14,285 provide by Oregon Department of Corrections

These disparities should concern all of us. I admire the progress our agencies have made in dealing with over-representation of different communities in state programs. However, there is a need for tools at the legislative level to ensure that legislators can predict the impact of legislation will have on minorities before a bill is passed. This bill gives another tool to use. I urge your support of Senate Bill 463-A.

Thank you,

Representative Joseph Gallegos – HD 30

