

March 6, 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, I respectfully request your support for HB 2355. The Oregon Work Group on the Prevention of Profiling by Law enforcement has met for the past two years and we are pleased with the conclusions that the stakeholders have reached in HB 2355.

AFT-Oregon represents approximately 15,000 Oregon workers in community college and universities in faculty, graduate employee, and classified positions, K-12 classified positions, and child care workers. Some of our members have shared with us that they have personally experienced profiling. Our organization is committed to working to end this practice.

Every day people are targeted based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, housing status, sexual orientation or gender identity. While the legislature passed a ban on police profiling in 2015, there is still no structure in place to effectively identify, record and correct any profiling practices by Oregon law enforcement agencies.

By passing HB 2355 Oregon will continue to work to change the culture of policing, make neighborhoods safer, and communities stronger. It is crucial that we begin to collect data on all officer-initiated pedestrian and traffic stops, provide updated and regular training to all levels of law enforcement, and accountability measures and guidance for departments that need to correct patterns and practices of profiling.

HB 2355 also addresses the collateral consequences of a profiling and disparities in convictions by reducing the charges for certain drug possession from a felony to a misdemeanor. This will help communities break the cycle of incarceration and recidivism.

Oregon needs to take the next step to end profiling. AFT-Oregon proudly supports HB 2355.

Sincerely,



Marcus Swift
Director of Political and Legislative Affairs
AFT-Oregon