

Support for HB3064: Adequately Measuring Accountability and Equity

My name is Ga lo Vann.

As an Oregonian and an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Eastern Oklahoma, I am in support of HB3064. Oregon needs an Equity Advisory Committee that would support the Criminal Justice Commission in successfully implementing the Justice Reinvestment program. With proper tracking and accountability, this bill will provide urgently needed support to marginalized communities with increased efficiency. Without valid data, there is little hope to accomplish equity.

As a public health professional, I witnessed the many benefits of community-specific educational interventions. Communities were better-impacted in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors when our programs used culturally-influenced tools. Our desired outcomes were magnified when race and its' cultural context underpinned our messages. Culturally-specific interventions elicit more positive and longer lasting outcomes in their target communities. Race as an aspect of identity is one of the most consequential predictors of a person's experience. Native American people in America suffer victimization from violent crime more than any other race, with 70% of such crime being committed by non-native perpetrators. Although crime has dropped across all communities for over twenty years, we are charged with crimes as frequently as before this decline. We are attacked and policed the most, all from outside our own communities. Without resources specifically targeting these issues, their effects will remain.

Efforts to heal work best when they meet the time they are in and the people they are for. This bill works to meet both ends for Oregon's most vulnerable community.

A major problem that Oregon's communities of color continue to face is how we are counted. The imprisoned Native American population is undercounted by as much as 2/3 across the state's prison system. Policymaking bodies cannot be accountable or hold others accountable to serve and promote equity if they do not use best practices to measure outcomes.

This moment is an opportunity to update the Accountability and Equity Act by implementing data collection methods to measure success in the Justice Reinvestment program. This update would:

- Allow counties to better understand how their Justice Reinvestment funds can be more effectively directed in order to ensure that local community needs are being met, specifically for historically underserved communities
- Hold counties accountable for how funding is spent so that the Justice Reinvestment program goals are more effectively met

If you want to promote equity in underserved communities, stop marginalizing us in data. If you don't count us, you can't serve us.

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