

01 March 2021

RE: Support of the Oregon Advocacy Commission Office's Budget Request SB 5501  
FROM: Noah Pellikaan; Quartermaster, Multnomah County Search and Rescue; Precinct  
Committee Person, Multnomah County Democrats; Shop Steward, UFCW Local 555; nonprofit  
board member.

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Golden and Representative Smith and members of the Joint Committee  
on Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of additional funding of the Oregon  
Advocacy Commissions.

To get only 1.5 additional staff hired to one of the most underfunded yet most important sects of  
our state government is a miniscule yet vitally important ask. Racial inequities and injustices  
have been ever present in all forms of life, from coverage in the news media to our systems of  
policing and criminal justice.

OPB states reports of hate crimes and bias incidents went up by 366% in 2020 in Oregon alone.  
This is not to mention the stories we saw nationwide. Stories of Asian business vandalized and  
their owners assaulted. Stories of Ahmaud Arbery hunted down, Breonna Taylor shot dead in her  
sleep, and a knee on George Floyd's neck for eight minutes and fifteen seconds while he called  
for his mom. We are seeing years of anti-immigration rhetoric ramping up, which has resulted in  
children in cages, a travel ban, and increased bias against Hispanic and Muslim Americans. We  
see those in power, from celebrities to Supreme Court justices to the New York governor being  
accused of sexual assault and predatory behavior against women-- seemingly without a  
semblance of justice being handed down. All of these groups being discriminated against are  
incredibly vulnerable to being harmed and exploited by systems which should be working for all  
Americans.

This is where the Oregon Advocacy Commissions come into play. One of the smallest groups in  
our government is responsible for advocating for all women and racial minorities statewide, and  
it has proven itself very effective and extremely vital for the thriving of all Oregonians. The very  
bare minimum that can be done is to provide the commissions an additional 1.5 staff in order to  
have a total of four individuals fight for the rights of many tens of thousands of Oregonians.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify and demonstrate my wholehearted support for SB5501.

Yours truly,  
Noah Willem Pellikaan

