



March 1, 2021

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Akashdeep Singh and I am the Policy and Advocacy Manager at OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon. It is my honor and pleasure to write in support of SB 499.

Oregon is one of the few states in the country where there is no compensation for the devastation a wrongful conviction can cause to someone's life. Housing, employment, and basic livability are all made more difficult and this does not even touch upon the personal losses of relationships with loved ones an individual may suffer from due to a wrongful conviction.

It can be incredibly difficult to rebuild one's life after a wrongful conviction. That difficulty is only augmented when financial compensation and judicial redress are not an option. SB 499 waives sovereign immunity on wrongful imprisonment claims, includes financial compensation, and finally provides wrongfully convicted Oregonians a pathway to justice.

We urge you to vote yes on SB 499.

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

*Akashdeep Singh*

Akashdeep Singh, JD

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