

I am submitting testimony to strongly support the effort led by Crystal Akins to create an Oregon State Song Contest that is inclusive. The current state song is unconscionably racist, with the reference to the "Fairest men" being just one of many glaring issues. As a resident of Oregon, this song does not represent me, does not represent or speak to the majority of people who live here, and should not be associated with our state.

With HB 2329, decision makers have a chance to intentionally support a process to open the door for BIPOC voices, particularly Indigenous voices, to participate in creating a better cultural symbol for Oregon. Since the current state song that has been allowed to persist for so many years directly glorifies violence against Native communities, I think the least the legislature can do is to create a public process that will allow more voices to be heard in developing a replacement.

Thank you for accepting this testimony in support of HB 2329.