

March 8, 2021

Chair Senator Prozanski, Vice-Chair Senator Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot 110 Implementation,

My name is Danita Harris, a life-long Black Oregonian and small business owner that focuses on DE&I work and political consulting throughout the state; I am writing in favor of SB 618.

While many folks suggest that reparations should **only** be concerned with chattel slavery, the harsh reality is that the systems that allowed for such brutality did not go away. It shifted and became repurposed through policies of exclusion and further exploitation, which means that the impacts of slavery are very much so felt today.

The impacts of racist policies have a rippling effect. In Oregon's 2010 census, Black Oregonians only made up 2.2% of the population due to the uniquely crafted exclusion laws found within Oregon's Constitution and the lack of opportunity allowed by the state.

Oregon is not immune from our country's history of white supremacy. Redlining shaped our communities; exclusion laws proactively worked to minimize Black American immigration into the state; land ownership policies ensured Black settlers would not have equal access to property. Effectively withering opportunities for the amassment of wealth in Oregon while slavery created the wealth and subsequent resources that allowed for westward immigration.

We, as a state, continue to struggle with the conceptualization of the value of free labor and minimized opportunities for the decades to follow. The debt of unpaid work has not, by any stretch of the imagination, been realized. Black contribution to the state's financial well-being has never been discussed or actualized in any tangible and meaningful way.

SB 618 allows for the state to examine the ways by which reparations may be made possible. SB 618 will allow for data necessary to determine reparations methods, an essential and critical step towards acknowledging the cost of chattel slavery and the decades of policies that minimized Black Oregonians' wealth.

I implore you to vote Yes on SB 618.

Danita Harris  
Owner, Citrine Solutions