

Southwest Portland Huddle
Mar. 8, 2021
TO: Senate Education Committee
Letter in Support of SB 683

The Southwest Portland Huddle writes in support of SB 683 (sponsored by Senators Frederick and Wagner).

The Huddle has been meeting monthly since 2017. We represent a membership that has over 30 people, most but not all from SW Portland. We make regular commitments to various organizations in our community.

SB 683 is both important and timely given the more than 100 days of Black Lives Matter protests last summer in Multnomah County, the State and our nation. This is an opportunity for Oregonians to state that Black Lives Matter. This is an important statement. Oregon is a former "sundown" state that, for many years legally excluded Black residents. The inequity and trauma of this racist state policy has shaped our society today. One result is that only a little over 2% of Oregonians identify as Black. Intimidation and anti-Blackness by the dominant race have left Oregon's Black and broader BIPOC community powerless in the face of institutionalized racism. While it is not possible to unwind the past, legislation can be used to create a better future. In order to get to that better future, we must implement policies that revolutionize and transform institutions and celebrate the contributions of all people of color to Oregon and the nation.

SB683, through increasing the awareness of our youth and society of these issues, might provide a chance to achieve true and lasting change. Let the truth set us free.

Sincerely,
Southwest Portland Huddle