

March 9, 2021

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

My name is Daniel Hayes. I am a resident of Eugene. I hold a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Connecticut and work as a Union Organizer with care providers. I am submitting this testimony as a private citizen representing my own views. I write to you today in support of reparations for slavery for Black Oregonians. I have two main reasons for this. The first is that it is simply the right thing to do. The second reason is that after abolition, Oregon implemented laws that structurally denied access to wealth for Black residents. While many of those laws may have been changed, simply ending a bad policy is not enough to meaningfully address the hardship that was created.

Some of the racist policies impacting Black Oregonians included prohibitions on owning land and redlining as a matter of policy. Laws also prevented Black American immigration to the state. Policies like these worked to prevent access to wealth while the enslaved built the wealth. Reparations would allow the opportunity to begin to address that history in a meaningful and tangible way.

Please vote yes on SB 618. This bill could begin the work of understanding the best path forward in this long overdue effort. We need to acknowledge the cost of chattel slavery as well as the decades of policies that followed which minimized Black citizens access to wealth. Please do the right thing and support this bill.

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