



*Serving Portland and  
the World to the Glory  
of God since 1906*

## Augustana Lutheran Church

*"...and what does  
the Lord require  
of you but to do  
justice, and to love  
kindness, and to  
walk humbly with  
your God."  
— Micah 6:8*

**Rev. Dr. W. J. Mark Knutson**  
Pastor

2710 NE 14th Ave  
Portland, OR 97212

503.288.6174  
[www.augustana.org](http://www.augustana.org)



March 10, 2021

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair  
Senate Judiciary Committee

### **RE: SB 621 and SB 613**

I am writing this letter in strong support of SB 621 as well as SB 613. As Senior Pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church, Portland, for the past 25 years, Police Reform has been a high priority. As a founding Steering Committee member of the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform, we have worked tirelessly on this for over two decades. We have been in Federal Court on the Settlement Agreement with the City of Portland, US Department of Justice, the Portland Police Association and the Mental Health Alliance for the past several years seeking real change.

I write today primarily as a member of the Real Police Accountability Steering Committee that led the way on the historic Measure 26-217 that passed in the General Election overwhelmingly, with 82% of Portlanders voting for it. Police Reform and the transformation of how the work is done to the benefit of all is one of the great moral issues of our day. This is especially true with a system that was built on systemic racism and white supremacy. As you all know, this is a local as well as national issue of the highest priority.

Through the years in community gatherings and forums the inequities of policing, especially in the African American, Native American, Latino, Asian American and Middle Eastern communities are well known. Those with mental health challenges know this well. Refugees and immigrants are also well aware of these great inequities of justice. To transform what we now have and build something that leads to public safety for all requires police accountability and a true change in culture, recruitment, and training.

SB 621 (and SB 613) help to continue this vital process so we can weave a just, equitable and inclusive community that truly embraces and celebrates the diversity and gifts of all who call Oregon home. I strongly encourage passage of SB 621 and SB 613.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. W. J. Knutson  
Senior Pastor, Augustana Lutheran Church  
Portland, Oregon