

Portland Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Mar. 9, 2021
TO: Senate Education Committee
Letter in Support of SB 683

The Portland Buddhist Peace Fellowship (PBPF) writes in support of SB 683 (sponsored by Senators Frederick and Wagner). PBPF shares the Vision and Mission of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, founded in 1978. As a national organization, we share the History of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. The Portland branch of the organization was organized in 2001 and continues to evolve.

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.

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,
PBPF