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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)



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To Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and Members of the Committee

**RE: SB 683**

For the record, my name is Rev. Dr. W. J. Mark Knutson and I have served as Senior Pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church in Portland for the past 25 years. Augustana is a large, thriving multicultural, multinational congregation with members born in 21 nations on every continent, many tribal members and others born in all 50 states.

We are home to several major diverse non-profits that serve the community from the Augustana Center for Justice and Systemic Change, striving for diversity, equity and inclusion. We have been on the Steering Committee for the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform since its inception, and are active in Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Lift Every Voice Oregon, and many other organizations as together we weave the Beloved Community.

We join many others in Oregon in support of SB 683 which requires that children from kindergarten through high school learn about the racist history of Oregon, the consequences we see today and the solutions that we can work on together to overcome systemic racism and become an anti-racist state.

Our children and youth in Oregon are not only the future leaders of our society but they are leaders today. They want to and need to know the truth of our past, in order that they might help to lead the changes that must be made for a just and equitable future of promise for all.

SB 683 addresses one of the great moral issues of our day. Racism and white supremacy are this country's original sin. Oregon can acknowledge it and help lead the way in overcoming it and creating a new and just society where all may truly thrive. This is no time to delay, the time is now, this is that Kairos moment in time to act by taking an important step forward with the passage of SB 683.

Blessings to each of you, and thank you for your service on behalf of all.

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