



# Urban League of Portland

March 11, 2021

Rep. Janelle Bynum, Chair House Judiciary  
Reps. Ron Noble & Karin Power, Vice-Chairs  
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Chair Bynum and the Members of the House Committee On Judiciary,

I am the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Urban League of Portland. As a nationally recognized nonprofit, our mission is to empower African-Americans and others across Oregon and Southwest Washington to achieve equality in education, employment, health, economic security, and quality of life.

As the proponent of the previously passed SB 420, the Urban League stands behind the Cannabis Equity Act. SB 420 was an important step forward but did not go far enough. We ask that you support Oregon's path in fostering jobs, ownership and economic justice for all Oregonians by supporting the present bill. For years, damage has been inflicted on African-Americans due to disparate application of state and federal cannabis laws. Since our state legalized the cannabis industry, it has proven to create jobs and opportunities. During the pandemic, the industry is one of the employers that is continuing to hire and pay substantial taxes to the state treasury. Yet too many Black, Indigenous and other Oregonians of color are being excluded from the wealth that is being created. Passing and implementing HB 3112 will proactively expunge cannabis based offenses and will continue to restore past injustices to Black community. This body was not ready to do so when SB 420 was considered. It should be ready now.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the Cannabis Equity Act. We hope that you take this opportunity to help all Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Nkenge Harmon Johnson  
President & Chief Executive Officer  
Urban League of Portland