

My name is Amy Penkin and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who lives and works in Portland but cares for patients and clients from around the State of Oregon. I am writing to request your support for HB2337. This bill declares racism as a public health crisis in Oregon and signals the need for accelerated, intentional actions to heal the legacies and injustices of racism as experienced interpersonally, institutionally, and structurally.

Research shows that racism causes harm, trauma, illness, and death to Black, Indigenous, and people of color. HB 2337 was developed by the Oregon Health Equity Task Force which is composed of leaders and community-based organizations representing BIPOC, Tribal, and Immigrant and Refugee communities and includes six initial strategies that are responsive to the specific needs of their communities to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities.

1. Expand and support the collection of REAL-D data
2. Meaningfully invest in community engagement to identify future strategies
3. Health Equity Policy Analyst to disrupt policy from maintaining racist outcomes
4. Increase health equity through language access
5. Increase community voice in the legislative process
6. Remove barriers to increase access and quality of care in BIPOC communities

I urge you to support HB 2337.

Thank you for the consideration.

Amy Penkin, LCSW