

Kate Brown
Governor



**Oregon Commission on Asian and
Pacific Islander Affairs**
“Advocating Equality and Diversity”
421 SW Oak Street, Portland, OR 97204
O: 503.302.9725
E: oaco.mail@oregon.gov

House Committee on Rules
Testimony in Support of HB 2337
March 23, 2021

Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chair Drazan and Vice-Chair Paul Holvey, and Members Bonham, Fahey, Salinas, and Zika,

My name is Jacqueline Leung and I am a Commissioner with the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs in support of HB 2337, Declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis.

It is no question that racism is a public health crisis. Across the nation, and in Oregon, there has been an ongoing and systematic spike of racist violence against our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Not only are we going through a national crisis as COVID-19 continues to impact us, we are going through a local crisis happening right here in Salem. At the Salem City Council meeting on January 25, the City Council approved by unanimous decree that racism is a public health crisis. As I had stated during City Council deliberations, as elected leaders, we must call out racism and white supremacy in all its form and to ensure our community knows we stand against racist practices that permeate from structural and institutional racism to the lived experiences that our communities of color deal with EVERYDAY.

Second, the passage of HB 2337 will provide long term support for all Oregonians. Addressing health inequities requires skilled personnel and researchers to make informed recommendations while utilizing an equity lens. This work does not happen overnight. The passage of HB 2337 would increase funding to the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office to ensure Oregonians are provided with the proper resources necessary to thrive.

Racism permeates in both institutional and systemic settings and continues to harm Oregonians. Other states have approved of this concern and it is not unheard of or a new concept. If the leadership of Keizer and Salem, the State Capitol of Oregon, can pass resolutions declaring racism as a public health crisis, State leadership can pass a law that formally declares racism as a public health crisis and prioritize our BIPOC of Oregon. I urge you to pass HB 2337.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Leung