

TESTIMONY ON SB 183A
Full Faith and Credit of Tribal Judgments, Decrees and Orders
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
MAY 13, 2021

PRESENTED BY: HON. LISA LOMAS,
CHIEF JUDGE OF THE WARM SPRINGS TRIBAL COURT

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Noble and Power, Members of the Committee, my name is Lisa Lomas and I am the Chief Judge of the Warm Springs Tribal Court and Co-Chair of the Oregon Tribal Court State Court Forum (“the Forum”), I support Senate Bill (SB) 183A. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important bill.

SB 183A will ensure that restraining orders issued in our Tribal Court systems are honored throughout the state of Oregon. We also want to be assured that they are included in Oregon’s Law Enforcement Data System to ensure protection and safety of the victims, both on and off our reservation. SB 183A, Section 1 also furthers tribal sovereignty and the independence of courts by ensuring that other tribal court orders and judgments can be enforced throughout our state, the same as any other judgment from a neighboring state court system.

I would like to focus my comments on the provisions addressing the protections for victims, as this is the most pressing need we see in my community. Victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, harassment or stalking frequently need the protection of a tribal restraining order in a neighboring county where they live, work, or travel. They then often compelled to register the tribal restraining order as a Foreign Judgment Order and sometimes pursue a separate protection order in that jurisdiction to ensure law enforcement protection. Victims get discouraged by having to file a new restraining or protection order in another jurisdiction because it requires them to relive the abuse that they endured.

I am pleased to share that, in our region, we have many dedicated partners to further this effort to protect victims. Tribal agencies (Victims of Crime Services, Tribal Prosecution, Tribal Court and Law Enforcement) have moved forward positively with our neighboring county agencies (Jefferson County Victim Assistance Program, District Attorney’s Office and Law Enforcement) with Full Faith and Credit training from the National Center on Protection Orders and Full Faith & Credit, Tribal Law & Policy Institute. This training included Kelly Gaines Stoner and Sarah Sabri, Domestic Violence Resource Prosecutor, Sr. Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Justice Division of the Oregon Department of Justice. That gathering of stakeholders helped us coalesce a strategy and goals, and this bill furthers those goals of protecting victims who have pursued protective orders in tribal justice systems.

This bill received 28 aye votes on the Senate floor with two members excused. I hope to see Senate Bill 183A move out of this committee and receive equally strong support on the House floor.

On behalf of our community, I ask you to please support Senate Bill 183A. Thank you.