



STATE OF OREGON
Office of the Governor
KATE BROWN

HB 2167 — Codifying the RJC
February 2021

Overview

Racism is a structural problem, meaning that it is a social problem with a source and cause located in the political, economic, cultural, and social institutions of society and stems from the inequitable distribution of access, power, influence, opportunities, and resources. As such, government intervention to disrupt and dismantle systemic bias and structural racism must be prioritized to counter hundreds of years of racism, oppression, and colonization so that we achieve the goal of redistributing the power, influence, opportunities, and distribution of resources in order to achieve a racial just Oregon.

Because of historic inequities and complicity of Oregon legislation and the disproportionate impacts to Oregonians, we must change how we listen to, engage with, respond to, and support Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) and Tribal members in Oregon. Leaders in the public sector, business community and non-profit sector must work with Black, Indigenous and People of Color to dismantle the structures of racism that have created grave disparities in virtually all of our social systems and structures, including: mass incarceration and criminal justice involvement, access to housing, health outcomes, economic opportunity and wealth creation, and educational attainment. The urgency could not be greater in this moment to channel and follow the voices of those people most impacted by historical and institutional racism in Oregon and create a system with them that fully supports us all. Achieving this goal will require a new approach to everyday norms and reframing of processes to an equitable, healthy, just, and anti-racist state, county, and local communities in Oregon.

By codifying the Racial Justice Council, we will put into statute requirements for Governor's and state agencies to engage with BIPOC and Tribal communities as part of their budget development and legislative agendas; create connections between the RJC and its committees with legislative champions to further the work of creating a racially just Oregon; and create a system to continue to support agencies in program development and implementation that is rooted in racial justice and moving Oregon to a place where a person's race no longer predicts their outcomes.

Boards and Commissions Reform:

To ensure boards and commissions represent the diversity of Oregonians, the final section of the bill permits the Governor to overlook statutory membership requirements in favor of increasing diversity to the extent necessary to appoint members representing all Oregonians. The Governor must note that the appointment falls outside the existing statutory membership requirements.