



March 1, 2021

Oregon House of Representatives  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
House Judiciary Subcommittee on Equitable Policing Committee

Dear Chair Janelle Bynum, Vice-Chair Ron Noble and Members of the Committee:

I submit this letter on behalf of the Oregon National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW) in support of HB 2986, which adds the word “gender” to the list of attributes for which police officers are trained to detect and avoid the influence of prejudice in their interactions with people encountered in the course of duty.

The Oregon National Organization for Women is particularly concerned that preconceived notions held by police officers with respect to “normal” or “acceptable” behavior on the part of women can lead to mistaken and adverse interactions. When officers are not sensitized to inherent bias, they can misinterpret behaviors as being aggressive or uncooperative in women that would be seen as normal or acceptable for men in a variety of ways. Police officers must be educated to recognize and suppress this tendency in their own behavior when dealing with the public, especially women.

Please support this legislation and add gender to the list of prejudices that police training must work to counteract.

Respectfully,

Christine Chin Ryan  
President, Oregon NOW

Rebecca Callison  
Legislative Chair, Oregon NOW