

March 2, 2021

Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation Committee
900 Court Street NE, HR A
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

Portland State University, Oregon Health & Science University, Portland Community College, and the City of Portland strongly support Senate Bill 398. Display of a noose is a representation of hate that incites fear. It is a tool of racism, lynching, murder and the intimidation and control of people based upon the color of their skin.

Last May, a disgusting act of racism was committed at a construction site for the 4th and Montgomery Building where our communities have come together to create an inclusive space for education, collaboration, and progress. All parties involved in the construction project - Portland State University, Portland Community College, Oregon Health & Science University and City of Portland - acted quickly to condemn the display of the noose. Unfortunately, the incident is one of many around our state.

This act of hatred was heartbreaking and reprehensible. It is particularly troubling at a moment when our country seems to be waking up – finally – to the legacy of slavery, institutionalized racism and our collective failure as a society to address anti-Black racism. Incidents like this one, and similar incidents happening around the country, remind us how deeply racism is embedded in our culture and how far we have to go to attain justice for Black Americans.

We urge your support of SB 398 so that we can finally name the display of noose for what it is, a crime of intimidation.

Thank you,

