

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

My name is Trish Jordan, and I am the Executive Director and co-founder of Red Lodge Transition Services and a Registered Nurse. Red Lodge Transition Services is a culturally-specific organization whose mission is to prevent incarceration and reduce recidivism among Native Americans.

All Oregonians should have access to healing, treatment, and safety. But public safety dollars in Oregon have failed to keep our communities safe. Our current approach prevents essential public safety grant funds from meeting the needs of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color.

We can eliminate these barriers. By changing some of how public safety dollars are invested, communities across Oregon will have better access to the resources they need to begin to feel safe, heal, and rebuild their lives.

This proposal would create a third, new program of Justice Reinvestment. Justice Reinvestment is a 10 year old program that focuses on building community safety while keeping people out of prison, but it currently doesn't fund any culturally specific programs.

This new program, the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program, will invest \$10 million that will be administered by NW Health Foundation. NWHF will grant funds to culturally-specific organizations and culturally-responsive providers throughout the state.

In Oregon, people of color are targeted, jailed, and imprisoned at disproportionate rates. According to the Department of Justice, Native Americans are incarcerated at a rate 38% higher than the national average. Native Americans are about 2% of the total Oregon population. Red Lodge believes Native Americans in Oregon prisons are undercounted by 20% to 25%. We believe our people represent 5% to 7% of the total prison population.

Systemic racism is enmeshed into our criminal justice system. Many people of color, specifically Native Americans do not trust our judicial system, citing 500 historical years of unfair treatment. Prison did not exist on Turtle Island, AKA United States of America, prior to 1491. Traditionally, Native Americans practice restorative justice to correct harm inflicted upon others as well as reduce and prevent unacceptable behavior.

Culturally-specific organizations have not had the same opportunities to access criminal justice funds, and as a result, outcomes for communities of color have not been as successful as they could be in combating incarceration and recidivism. This bill provides the first opportunity for communities of color to meaningfully engage with the JRI grantmaking process and apply for funds for culturally specific services. Culture is what shapes us. It influences our beliefs, worldview, foods, clothing, values, and more. Culture is Best Practice for people of color!

Who we are is encoded in our DNA. Native Americans have assimilated, but we will never give up our connection to our Ancestors and cultural practices! We know how our community hurts, and what it takes to heal. We need funding now, and Oregon cannot wait any longer to invest in communities of color.

This program is important because the CJC's HB 3064 report has shown that Oregon's Justice Reinvestment program has historically not invested in culturally-specific organizations. Since culturally-specific organizations are the preferred service delivery model for communities of color across the state (cite the HB 3064 report), this means that white people are the ones benefiting from existing JRI resources the most.

A new approach to accomplish the necessary goal of investing in Oregon's culturally-specific organizations that will serve those impacted by the criminal justice system is needed. With Northwest Health Foundation, an organization with decades of experience working with culturally-specific organizations, administering the resources, we can ensure that funds will reach the organizations that are best suited to serve the communities that need these investments the most.

We have the opportunity to eliminate the barriers that prevent communities of color from receiving public safety dollars. By changing how public safety dollars are invested, communities across Oregon will have better access to the resources they need to begin to feel safe, heal, and rebuild their lives.

Please support SB 1510.