



February 1, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
From: **Isa Peña, Innovation Law Lab**  
Re: Support for Transforming Justice SB 1510

Chair Prosanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee:

My name is Isa Peña and I am the Director of Strategy at Innovation Law Lab, an Oregon-based non-profit that leverages advocacy, technology and law for immigrant and refugee justice. I am writing in support of SB 1510: Transforming Justice on behalf of our organization.

As an organization that works with immigrants and refugees, we believe every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity and respect. This bill would reduce racial disparities in traffic stops by making a broken headlight, taillight, brake light, or license plate light a “secondary offense,” meaning that an officer can issue a citation only if a driver is pulled over for something else. In our line of work, we have seen undocumented individuals be pulled over for broken headlights and, because of this unnecessary interaction with law enforcement, be unjustly and unfairly deported. Unnecessary interactions between law enforcement and black and brown Oregonians increase the risk of excessive force, unfair and unjust deportation and violence in our communities. By changing how traffic stops are made, we can limit unnecessary traffic stops, make our communities safer and prevent unjust detention and deportation.

Many of us, especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color, feel vulnerable and unprotected in our own communities, homes, and workplaces due to excessive, unnecessary interactions with law enforcement. Oregonians who suffer the most from interactions with law enforcement are the same communities most underserved by our systems of courts, education, transportation, health, and victim services. Many immigrants and refugees are often fleeing violence in their country and unnecessary interaction with law enforcement increases fear, anxiety and mistrust in law enforcement.

This bill creates a Justice Reinvestment Equity Program to fund services that promote racial equity, address racial disparities prevalent in Oregon’s criminal justice system, and reduce prison use. It has been proven that when we invest public dollars into our communities, we increase safety. As an organization that works directly with the immigrant and refugee community, we know that culturally specific service programs are often the first place where people call for help. That is because the community trusts our organizations. 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 SB1510 and enact these critically needed changes that are aligned with Oregon and Innovation Law Lab's vision for a public safety system rooted in racial equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Isa Peña". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "P" at the end.

Isa Peña  
Director of Strategy  
Innovation Law Lab