



February 6, 2022

**Re: Support for SB 1569-1**

Chair Beyer, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 1569 with the -1 amendments. My name is Jenny Lee, and I am the Deputy Director at the Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC), an alliance of culturally specific community-based organizations dedicated to collective action for racial justice.

SB 1569-1 will provide us with critical information that will help build a more equitable economy that works for every Oregonian. This legislation will give taxpayers the opportunity to voluntarily select up to three racial and ethnic identities on their state income tax form. These identities will use the REAL-D definitions (Race, Ethnicity, Language, and Disability) that were developed by the Oregon Health Authority through an extensive process in collaboration with community-based organizations, including CCC member organization APANO.

The ability to voluntarily self-identify using definitions that better capture the diversity both across and within communities of color is essential to data collection that accurately represents these communities. No racial or ethnic group is a monolith. CCC and our Research Justice Institute recognize that REAL-D definitions should be the standard for administrative data collection. Just as REAL-D data collection has helped Oregon advance health equity, self-reported data on racial and ethnic identity can help us build more equitable tax policies.

Right now, we are able to analyze the implications of our tax system for taxpayers based on geography and income, but we lack the information needed to understand the full picture of how our tax structure and expenditures impact communities of color. This information will help us develop strategies to reduce disparities and build an economy that works for all of us, including the communities who face the greatest economic injustices: Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Pacific Islander communities. By way of example, our Research Justice Institute's forthcoming report on the racial wealth gap in Oregon would have greatly benefited from any state agency analyses of this data to craft specific policy recommendations to address wealth disparities. We also appreciate the stringent protections of this data that are included in this bill to prevent any misuse of the data, particularly in ways that could harm taxpayers of color.

On behalf of the Coalition of Communities of Color, I ask that you support SB 1569-1 so Oregon can have the information we need to create a more equitable tax system and ultimately, a stronger economy for Oregonians and their families.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Lee", written over a thin horizontal line.

Jenny Lee  
Deputy Director  
Coalition of Communities of Color