



Advocating for Equity and Diversity throughout Oregon
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House Committee on Natural Resources
Testimony in Support of SB 1533
February 21, 2022

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Hudson & Brock Smith,
Representatives Goodwin, Helm, Moore-Green, Owens,
Pham, Valderrama, and Wilde,

For the record, my name is Silky J. Booker and I am a Commissioner on the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs. On behalf of the OCBA, I am writing to express our support of SB 1533, which makes federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon eligible for certain grants related to cleaner air spaces and smoke filtration systems.

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs

Chair:
Mariotta Gary-Smith

Vice-Chair:
Dr. Angela Addae, Esq.

Commissioners:
Dr. Silky J. Booker (H.C.)
Djimet Dogo
Benjamin Duncan
Jessica Price, Esq.

Legislative Members:
Senator James I. Manning

Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office Staff
Albert Lee, Executive Director
Nancy Kramer, Policy & Research
Dr. Kyl Myers, Public Affairs

1. The Commission on Black Affairs works toward economic, social, political, and legal equity for Black Oregonians. We do this through advocacy, public policy research, leadership development, and partnerships.
2. In our statutory role of bringing equity focus and community voice into Oregon policy making, the OCBA strongly supports SB 1533.



Native Americans are the first peoples of Oregon and have served as stewards of the land since time immemorial. Over the centuries, the colonization of land, and human-caused climate changes have compromised the health of forests and led to a rising frequency and severity of wildfires in Oregon and neighboring states that negatively affect indigenous peoples. It is critical that the tribes of Oregon have access to federal grants to improve cleaner air spaces and mitigate public health harms caused by wildfires that know no borders.

Having access to clean air spaces and smoke filtration systems is a public health crisis and solutions must be made available to all Oregon residents, including the Oregon tribes and the American citizens that comprise them.

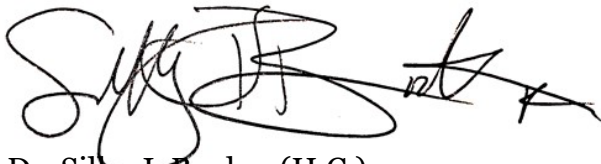
Native Americans are the first citizens of this country and deserve equitable access to federal grants available to non-indigenous Americans. This current exclusion is evidence of the discriminatory, genocidal, legal system experienced by indigenous Oregonians.

Nearly 100 years ago, Congress granted citizenship to all Native Americans born within the United States. Following a 1928 study known as the Meriam Report, the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act was created in response to the findings that the federal government was failing at its goals of protecting Native Americans' land, resources, health, and culture. A century has gone by, and local and federal governments continue failing at protecting indigenous peoples. SB 1533 is a small but important step in repairing the harms that have been inflicted upon the Tribes of Oregon by colonization.



The Oregon Commission on Black Affairs stands in solidarity with Native Americans and urges the committee to support SB 1533 and make Indian tribes in Oregon eligible for federal grants related to cleaner air spaces, smoke filtration, and the development of young Native Americans as official stewards of Oregon lands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Silky J. Booker', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Silky J. Booker (H.C.)

Commissioner, Oregon Commission on Black Affairs

