



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Testimony in Support for HB 3443

March 20, 2023

Chair Kropf, Vice Chair Wallan, Vice Chair Andersen, and members of the committee,

My name is Khanh Pham, State Representative for HD 46, representing outer Southeast Portland. I am honored to chief sponsor and testify for HB 3443, our Bias Crimes Victims Support Package, with the -1 amendment. These reforms build upon the incredible work of the DOJ's Civil Rights' division's Bias Response Hotline. I want to thank the Attorney General and her incredible team, Fay Stetz-Waters and Kimberly McCullough, for their leadership.

Since January 2020, Oregon has been responding to hate and bias in a way that reflects our state's values of inclusion and belonging. No other state in the nation has a statewide hotline dedicated to supporting victims of hate and bias. Oregon leads this work in our country that is becoming more and more divided, and we must continue to set the standard and raise the bar.

These proposed law changes stem from the individual experiences and the larger data collected on the hotline, which you'll hear more about in later expert testimony. Victims of hate and bias may have many needs resulting from their experience, from safety and confidentiality, to employment and housing, for example. This bill's proposed changes speak to those needs to promote safety, center the humans harmed, and allow for more policy tools to demonstrate our collective commitment to repair and restore dignity and safety in the aftermath of hate.

And the need is dire. Reports to Oregon's statewide Bias Response Hotline since January 2020 show 6,175 racial slurs, physical assaults, hate graffiti defacing Oregonians' personal property, and other shameful targeting in our public spaces intending to harm and divide us. These incidents include everything from organized gangs livestreaming their criminal harassment of people as they try to buy a coffee, for hits, and for profit; to slur words spray painted on garages and cars to flyers handed out on doorsteps and at YMCAs trying to radicalize our young people. And these are just the tip of the iceberg,

The Bias Response Hotline centers individual survivors of hate and bias who decide to call and report, using trauma-informed practices to help victims navigate systems and allowing survivors to choose for themselves what next steps to take. The Hotline does not require a report to police and does not focus on the criminal justice system or perpetrators. On the Hotline, advocates validate that what happened to the survivor was *wrong*. The Hotline sees the humanity of callers. Victims of hate and bias often comment that the Hotline advocate was the first person to acknowledge the harm and to give space for healing.

A hate crime or a bias incident doesn't define an Oregon community, but how our community and our state collectively respond to hate and bias *does* define each and every one of us. Our

actions in the aftermath of hate define us. I am so **grateful** for the work the hotline does. I was proud to champion the hotline's expansion and resources in the 2021 session, and I am honored today to urge your support for HB 3443 with the -1 amendment. Thank you.