

Submitter: Jesce Horton

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

Measure: HB3431

Dear Chair Bynum and the Honorable Members of the House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

I am contacting you as a community member, business owner and resident of Portland, OR.

I am also a black man, previously arrested for small amounts of cannabis possession, who's father spent years in prison for cannabis possession. Despite my formal education in engineering at a top university, Ive had trouble climbing the economic ladder specifically due to these minor arrests.

I am writing to ask you to support the Oregon Economic Equity Investment Act, or HB 3431 because without a genuine state commitment to providing economic opportunities for people like me, everyone loses. Our industries will not have enough innovative entrepreneurs and talent, our communities will fail to benefit from economic growth of the cannabis industry, and Oregon will not make true on its promise to support communities who bore the brunt of the failed war on drugs...in which cannabis prohibition played the major role.

Black people were arrested at 4 times the rate of their White counterparts in Oregon for cannabis possession despite usage being equal across races. The criminal justice system stripped wealth from Black families with documented targeting of Black communities like draconian War on Drugs laws.

That is why it is so important to me and my community/company/etc that you support HB 3431.