



# PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFETY & JUSTICE

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Testimony in Support of HB 2676  
By Talia Gad, Communications Director, Partnership for Safety & Justice

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

At Partnership for Safety & Justice, we advocate for public safety and criminal justice policies that ensure accountability, equity, and healing for people convicted of crime, crime survivors, and the families and communities of both. For over 20 years, our work has promoted public safety with policies that keep families together, reduce racial disparities, and invest in communities across Oregon.

Prior to joining Partnership for Safety and Justice, I worked as a crisis response advocate for victims of sexual and domestic violence, mainly doing hospital-based advocacy in the immediate aftermath of violence and trauma.

Two years ago, Partnership for Safety and Justice partnered with crime victim and survivor advocacy agencies and organizations in the Portland Metro area to better understand the experiences, barriers, and needs of crime victims of color. Groups included the City of Portland Office of Youth Violence Prevention, Red Lodge Transition Services, Latino Network, and the Multnomah County District Attorney's office.

Together we released *When We Tell Our Stories: How Survivors of Color are Most Harmed and Least Helped by the Public Safety System*. <https://safetyandjustice.org/whenwetellourstories/>

The report identified four findings that outline key barriers that crime victims and survivors of color experience in Oregon:

- 1) Most survivors of color do not report crimes
- 2) Most survivors of color do not have access to opportunities to heal
- 3) The criminal justice system prioritizes prosecution and incarceration over the needs of survivors
- 4) Many survivors of color do not identify as victims

**HB 2676 proposes solutions that begin to address each of these barriers experienced by crime survivors of color.**

To promote racial justice and racial equity in our public safety and criminal justice system, it's vital that we create more pathways to healing that are culturally specific and based in communities. It's also critical that victims and survivors are not required to report crimes to law

enforcement, particularly for communities that are overpoliced and have experienced systemic racism.

In these ways and others, the Oregon Department of Justice's proposal to improve crime victims' compensation takes meaningful steps to promote racial equity for crime victims and survivors in Oregon. While more needs to be done to improve access to healing for all Oregonians, HB 2676 is an essential step toward transforming our response to crime that is more racially equitable and that centers the needs of crime survivors.

**We urge you to support HB 2676.**