

February 26th, 2024

Testimony in support of bill SB 1596

Senate Committee on Business and Labor

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee

My name is Sam Guthman, my pronouns are she/her and I am the Policy Manager at APANO Communities United Fund (CUF), a culturally-specific organization that unites Asians and Pacific Islanders to build power, develop leaders and advance equity through organizing, advocacy, community development and cultural work.

I urge the committee to pass SB 1596, the Right to Repair bill in support of BIPOC communities and businesses. Not only does this bill provide a positive step for environmental waste reduction and reuse, but also supports small businesses in their work to make simple fixes for everyday technology. APANO has a long and fruitful history of supporting BIPOC communities and their right to be fiscally stable and healthy. SB 1596 would further allow businesses to garner income while simultaneously reducing hazardous, and hard to dispose of, electronic waste.

If passed, this bill could save the average Oregonian household hundreds of dollars per year by paying significantly less to repair common technologies like their phones and computers instead of buying new ones. This is crucial for students and employees alike across the state that depend on the use of laptops/computers to complete their learning and work. As we saw in May 2020, at the height of the pandemic we faced a laptop shortage leaving thousands without the means to attend their virtual classes and meetings. SB 1596 would help to close the digital divide gap by keeping computers around for longer and in turn ease the demand for new laptops.

Once again I ask the committee to vote “yes” on SB 1596, the Right to Repair in order to give our small businesses, BIPOC communities, online student learners, work from home employees, and everyone who relies on a healthful and clean environment a better and more equitable future. Thank you for your time and consideration today.

Thank you,
Sam Guthman
Policy Manager

APANO Communities United Fund (CUF)