

Submitter: Andrea Robinson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

I have been a resident of Oregon for one year and identify as a member of the African American community. I am very involved within the Black community in Portland specifically, and have heard firsthand accounts of the difficulties and systemic negligence that has contributed towards difficulty in sustaining economic prosperity as a community and safety for all. From Black exclusion laws up until the early 20th century, to the Vanport flood negligence in building a Black community in a temporary residential place due to its likelihood of destruction in the event of natural disaster, to the construction of the 5 freeway through Black neighborhoods, to the present-day ongoing gentrification of Alberta district due to the construction of the Moda Center AND what I presume is likely poor housing laws that do not support sustained living without unfair and discriminatory rent increases.

All this to say— this is what I have learned in a year from personal testimony and involvement in a plethora of Black organizations. What else, when investigated, will we find? What federal, state, and local laws were unknowingly discriminatory? Do we have proper and historical representation as a Black community in our local and state politicians? Is there economic and educational opportunity for all? What are the rates of pollution, and is there accessible public transportation in all areas of Portland, including and not limited to Gresham, Fairview, and North Portland, where Black Portlanders have been pushed to?

All that to say, I wholly support this bill and expect that politicians who aim to serve their constituents do the same. And from there, I demand transparency and open communication for all people in which you serve.