

Submitter: Megan Faszholz

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

Dear Chair Tran and Members of the Committee,

As a near lifelong resident of Oregon and a public health professional, I am testifying in strong support of HB 2995. Through my academic and professional work in public health, I have extensively studied the deep-rooted health and social inequities within our state, in addition to witnessing them firsthand. These inequities are not natural, nor are they simply remnants of the past—they are systemic, they are devastating, and without intentional action, they will continue to harm our communities for generations to come.

Establishing a task force dedicated to examining the impacts of systemic racism in Oregon is a critical step toward meaningful change. This task force must be representative of our state's communities, committed to holistic and comprehensive research, and transparent in communicating its findings to the public. Through this process, HB 2995 has the power to bring Oregonians together in pursuit of shared goals—something that can feel increasingly out of reach in today's world.

Both financial and nonfinancial reparations for the Black communities of Oregon are long overdue, and HB 2995 presents an opportunity for our state to lead with transparency, accountability, and justice. Oregon has a strong history of pioneering health policy, and now more than ever, we must channel that innovation into policies that empower and uplift historically marginalized communities. Only by acknowledging past harms and committing to meaningful repair can we begin to heal—and only through healing can we truly thrive as one.

Thank you for your time.