

Submitter: Catalina Frank

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

HB 2995 Creates a task force to study reparations for descendants of enslaved people who live in Oregon.

Why the bill matters: Before and after the Civil War, freed African Americans traveled west to begin new lives in Oregon. But the settlers encountered Black exclusion laws and a white population that did not welcome them. In 1844, Oregon territory banned slavery, but also threatened to whip Black people who stayed longer than three years in the territory. This history may be why only about 2.4 percent of Oregon's population identified as Black or African American in the 2020 Census.

Why the Latino Community Association supports HB 2995:

Black Oregonians

deserve compensation for the brutal subjugation and torn family ties they experienced

during slavery. They brought that trauma with them to Oregon and it has traveled down

to current generations. In the past, the Oregon Legislature inflicted harm on these people who wanted to build new lives in a free state.

Like Latinos, Black settlers contributed their labor and talents to the growth of Oregon.

They belong here like Oregonians of all ethnic groups. With HB 2995, the Legislature has an opportunity to reverse its legacy of Black exclusion laws. Let us begin the process to right the wrongs of the past.