

Submitter: Rachel Freed

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

I am writing to express my opposition to HB 2995, which seeks to establish a Task Force on Reparations to study and propose financial and non-financial reparations for Oregonians of African-American descent. I believe that this bill is not the appropriate way to address these issues.

Firstly, the establishment of a task force dedicated to reparations could lead to division rather than unity within our community. Instead of fostering a dialogue aimed at healing, it risks deepening existing societal rifts. Our focus should be on promoting inclusivity and understanding, rather than creating an environment where individuals are categorized and treated differently based on their ancestry.

Secondly, the financial implications of such reparations could place an undue burden on taxpayers and the state's budget. The potential costs associated with implementing reparations could detract from funding essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, which benefit all Oregonians. We should prioritize initiatives that uplift all communities rather than creating financial obligations that may not yield the desired outcomes.

Furthermore, the concept of reparations raises complex questions about eligibility, the definition of harm, and the potential for unintended consequences. A task force may struggle to arrive at a consensus on these issues, leading to further confusion and frustration within the community.

Instead of pursuing reparations, I urge the legislature to consider alternative approaches that focus on education, economic empowerment, and community development. Initiatives that promote job training, affordable housing, and access to quality education.

In conclusion, while the intent behind HB 2995 may be noble, I believe it is essential to prioritize unity, inclusivity, and practical solutions that benefit all Oregonians. I respectfully request that you reconsider your support for this bill and explore other avenues for fostering justice in our state.