

Dear Chair Tran, Vice-Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Lewis, and members of the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans,

I am in support for HB 2995 Relating to a task force on reparations for Oregonians of African American descent. I am hoping this can create change in Oregon and give support to the African American community within Oregon to guarantee a future for us that lives and want to thrive here.

I am originally from Detroit, MI and work as a Registered Nurse in Portland, OR. As a Black Nurse we make up 1.4% of the total of Registered Nurses that work in Oregon and with that can come isolation, gaslighting, and unfair treatment on the human level between patients and coworkers especially doctors here. I have been denied from taking care of patients because I am Black and one experience was during COVID while risking myself for the common good, a patient stated, "His hands is too big" and delivering care and questioning the care that I gave for the preconception of incompetence. I knew what it was related to, and it was not my hands, it was because I was Black.

Being Black in America let alone in Oregon can be challenging with the microaggressions, macroaggressions, and struggles with finding community that we face every day. The way how I explain racism in Oregon is "mentally malicious" because here when it is a disrespect because of your race, we get reprimanded for our reaction to the disrespect. For example, the Covington Report that is easily retrievable from the investigation that was conducted to investigate racial discrimination, and retaliation demonstrates the struggles that we face and how it can impact the patients that we serve. This taskforce will finally rectify the issues that we face in the present and our future and heal from the past. I have hope that Oregon can be a good place to live, feel safe, and appreciated for what we bring to Oregon.

Oregon will continue to lose Black talent from a variety of professions if the systemic issues is not faced and rectified. The way how the system is set-up from local government to HR at companies needs to change and I believe this is the benefit to the development of the Task Force.

I hope this Task Force is voted with a majority vote and focus on the humanity of us as a people compared to the DEI rhetoric that is being perpetuated on the news. That feeling of being white and making a wrong turn on a rough street if you can imagine for a second but being every day that you live. That is what being Black in Oregon can be like, and we are just trying to live and be our authentic selves but the culture that tries to force us to assimilate and leave our own individuality with our Blackness.

I hope you truly listen to the stories and look through a Humanity Lense on how we can improve this state for Black population that need the support of the Task Force.

Being Black at Work

Being Black at work means working twice as good all the time...to receive less than the recognition and rewards

Being Black at work means being under a magnifying glass and hyper-visible and still NOT being seen

Not allowed to have a bad day like your white peers and having to constantly smile, code switch, help everyone, and really want to cry from the lack of YOUR authenticity

To continue to fight for your ancestor's belief for a better life and still meeting the same treatment 400 years later

Speaking with other Black professionals that are tired

Tired of trying to pave the way, tired of having our voices hindered from what we want to say

Quoting Kelly Price: "Tired of feeling weak and being strong"

But then to be labeled as "strong" and "Black" means we are Superhuman

Feeling like an Endangered Species from the stress that impacts my body daily

To be Black in America is a health risk

On behalf of Black people working in predominantly white settings, WE ARE ONE

Hear US

See US

Believe US

Recognize US

Reward US

And treat US as equally that we are forced to treat those that can never empathize with our experience.

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