

Submitter: LaJuana Decker
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

Please vote no on HB 2995.

First, Oregonians are weary of attempts to divide them from their neighbors based on race, religion, sex, gender, or any other characteristic. Second, they are also oppressed by the ever-growing tax burden imposed on them by the Oregon legislature resulting in few practical solutions to the problems we face in Oregon. HB 2995 is an attempt to spend taxpayers' money on a fruitless quest to correct what neither time nor money can change.

Racism has been a human defect since the beginning of time. African-Americans are not the only ones who have experienced discrimination based on immutable characteristics. The Irish, the Japanese, the Italians, the Chinese, the Native Hawaiians, the Native Americans—all have suffered both economic and social harm at the hands of their fellow Oregonians because of immutable characteristics. Oregon's miscegenation law discriminated against Caucasian Oregonians who wanted to marry Chinese Americans or Native Americans. Singling out one group for reparations while ignoring the discrimination suffered by others is unjust and unconstitutional.

No one living in Oregon today was a victim of slavery. No one living in Oregon today has owned slaves. Slavery was never legal in the State of Oregon. Many Oregonians are descended from those who sacrificed life, limb, and property fighting a Civil War to erase the scourge of slavery from the U.S.

In addition, taxpayers of Oregon are struggling to keep their heads above financial water. They need the Oregon legislature to spend their money frugally and in ways that provide effective, common-sense solutions to today's problems. House Bill 2995 would be a wasteful and fruitless attempt to change history through division rather than to forge the future in unity.

In creating a task force to study reparations for African-Americans, House Bill 2995 would take Oregon into a long venture that would lead inevitably to expensive legal challenges and appeals. The courts have already ruled that discrimination more than 20 years in the past is too long ago to merit special treatment today. The Supreme Court has ruled against remedies "that are ageless in their reach into the past, and timeless in their ability to affect the future." They have also ruled that race-based special treatment in a state cannot be based on discrimination in another state. After

the expenditure of obscene amounts of taxpayers' money, the Supreme Court is likely to rule that any modern reparations are unconstitutional.

Please vote no on HB 2995. Let's move forward into a united future instead of wasting time and money on an impossible attempt to whitewash human nature and erase every wrong of the past. Let's spend our limited resources on today's problems.

Please vote no on HB 2995.