

Submitter: Melissa Burgess

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Melissa Burgess, and I am writing in support of HB 2995. Oregon must take meaningful action to address the harms of systemic racism against Black Oregonians. The establishment of a Task Force on Reparations is a necessary and overdue step.

Oregon has a long history of anti-Black racism, from Black exclusion laws written into the state's original constitution to ongoing racial disparities in policing, education, health care, and employment. Although Black folks make up only a small percentage of Oregon's population, they are overrepresented in the criminal justice system and disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities. These disparities are a result of generations of discriminatory policies and practices.

HB 2995 is one small step toward accountability and repair.

Sincerely,
Melissa Burgess