

Milo McDonald

House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government,
and Veterans

RE: Strong Support for HB 2995

26 February, 2025

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

My name is Milo McDonald, and I live in Portland, Oregon. I am writing to testify in strong support of establishing a Task Force on Reparations, HB 2995, which will study and develop proposals for financial and nonfinancial reparations for Oregonians of African-American descent, develop appropriate methods for educating the public about the task force's findings and recommend appropriate remedies based on the task force's findings.

As Black History Month draws to a close, it's imperative to recognize that the economic successes of the United States are a direct result of the labor of enslaved African Americans. Though it has been 160 years since slavery was outlawed, African Americans continue to be economically suppressed and mistreated in this country, resulting in great disparities in income, wealth, and education between Black Americans and their white neighbors. Over the past century, there have been many legislative moves made towards reparations for African Americans, including a national apology, land grants, financial payment, and social service benefits - yet these promises have repeatedly fallen through or failed to take effect. Our state government has the opportunity to atone for the legacy of slavery and the ongoing mistreatment of African Americans by taking action through a Task Force on Reparations.

The city of Portland is full of beautiful murals depicting smiling Black faces, representing our city's ideals of diversity and racial equity, yet we have thus far failed to create programs that would support and uplift African American Oregonians. Let us prove to African American Oregonians that we care for them. Establishing a Task Force on Reparations is a necessary and actionable first step towards repairing the past and present devastation caused by slavery and racial discrimination in the United States.

I urge the House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans to pass HB 2995.

Thank You,

Milo McDonald