

Submitter: Therese Picado

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2851

I oppose this bill which will essentially penalize or criminalize constitutionally protected activities including free speech and protest. During this time when the language of terrorism is being used to destroy American democracy, Oregon should be rather rolling back and certainly not expanding so-called terrorism laws. These laws are ripe for abuse and unnecessary because we already have criminal laws that sanction harm to property.

Our state should continue to be a national model in protecting democracy, speech, and protest.

Federal, state, and local governments have a well-documented, very-long history of invoking terrorism and related laws to surveil and target Black and brown communities and silence those who engage in political dissent – including racial and environmental justice activists.

Currently, we are seeing Trump weaponize terrorism laws and language to silence dissent and destroy American democracy. Last Saturday, the Trump administration had ICE detain Mahmoud Khalil, a green card holder and Columbia University student. On Tuesday, the White House said that Khalil distributed pro-Hamas flyers on Columbia's campus. This indicates that Trump is punishing Khalil for engaging in protected First Amendment activities and that it is the unproven allegation of terrorism and nothing more that is being used by Trump to detain Khalil and revoke his green card.

He is also calling people who are engaged in protests at Tesla dealerships domestic terrorists. They have a right to protest, especially in light of Elon Musk's unchecked illegal actions dismantling our government and ignoring court orders.

Do not further weaken our first amendment rights by passing this bill.