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On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1015

While SB1015 aims to address the pressing issue of community violence through a new grant program, several concerns have been raised regarding its implementation, effectiveness, and long-term viability.

1. Potential Redundancy with Existing Programs

Oregon already operates multiple initiatives targeting community violence through various state agencies and nonprofit organizations. Introducing a new grant program risks duplicating existing efforts, creating administrative inefficiencies, and diverting funding from more established, potentially more effective programs.

2. Lack of Direct Law Enforcement Involvement

SB1015 explicitly excludes law enforcement entities from grant eligibility. Critics argue that effective violence reduction requires coordinated efforts between community groups and law enforcement. By excluding police departments, the bill may miss valuable opportunities for integrated, community-informed public safety strategies.

3. Uncertain Efficacy of Funded Programs

Although the bill prioritizes “evidence-informed” services, it does not clearly define what constitutes adequate evidence. This vagueness opens the door for funding unproven or less effective programs, potentially undermining the overall impact of the initiative.

4. Administrative and Oversight Challenges

The bill proposes the creation of an oversight board to guide the development and administration of the grant program. While oversight is essential, establishing a new body introduces additional bureaucracy. Ensuring that board members are unbiased, representative, and experienced in violence prevention will be critical—and challenging.

5. Financial Implications and Sustainability

Launching and sustaining a new statewide grant program will require considerable investment. In a climate of budget constraints, critics question whether this funding is sustainable, especially if measurable reductions in violence are not realized in a timely manner.

Conclusion

Although SB1015 is grounded in a commendable goal—reducing community violence—opponents caution that without careful planning, the bill could fall short. Key concerns include redundancy with existing efforts, lack of collaboration with law enforcement, ambiguous efficacy standards, administrative complexity, and financial

sustainability. Addressing these issues will be vital to ensure the bill's success and the responsible use of public funds.