

Submitter:

Gregory McGill

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1015

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill 1015, which mandates the Oregon Department of Justice to establish a grant program aimed at reducing community violence in specific areas. While the intention to address violence is commendable, I have significant concerns about the bill's approach, cost, and potential outcomes.

First, this bill places an additional financial burden on Oregon taxpayers at a time when the state budget is already stretched thin. Creating and administering a new grant program requires substantial funding—not just for the grants themselves, but for staffing, oversight, and evaluation. Without clear evidence that this specific approach will yield measurable results, we risk diverting resources from existing programs that may already be addressing these issues more effectively.

Second, the lack of specificity in SB 1015 raises questions about its implementation. What qualifies an entity as "eligible"? How will "community violence" be defined and measured? Without rigorous criteria and accountability mechanisms, there's a real risk that funds could be misallocated to ineffective initiatives or organizations lacking the capacity to deliver results. Oregonians deserve assurance that any investment in public safety will be both targeted and impactful.

Finally, I worry about unintended consequences. Flooding certain communities with grant money could inadvertently fuel competition or tension among local groups, rather than fostering collaboration. Additionally, focusing solely on "disproportionately affected" areas might neglect broader statewide needs, creating a patchwork approach that fails to address the root causes of violence holistically.

I urge the committee to reconsider SB 1015 and instead prioritize proven, data-driven strategies that maximize existing resources. Violence reduction is a admirable goal, but this bill, as written, risks being an expensive experiment with uncertain outcomes. Thank you for considering my perspective.