

Submitter: Ty Lewis

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1015

I oppose SB 1015 dashed on the following:

1. Potential Redundancy with Existing Programs:

The State of Oregon currently operates numerous programs targeting community violence through multiple agencies and organizations. Introducing a new grant program would invite redundant efforts and administrative inefficiencies, diverting resources from existing and more effective initiatives.

2. Lack of Direct Law Enforcement Involvement:

SB1015 explicitly excludes law enforcement agencies from eligibility for the specified grants. Critics will argue effective community violence reduction requires collaboration between community organizations and law enforcement. By sidelining law enforcement, this bill will miss opportunities for comprehensive strategies that combine community engagement with policing efforts.

3. Uncertain Efficacy of Funded Programs:

The bill emphasizes funding for “evidence-informed” services but does not clearly define the criteria for what constitutes sufficient evidence. This ambiguity will result in grants being awarded to programs without a proven track record and lead to ineffective use of public funds.

4. Administrative and Oversight Challenges:

The creation of an oversight board to advise on the grant program’s development and administration introduces additional layers of bureaucracy. Ensuring that this board operates effectively and without bias presents challenges, particularly in selecting members who are truly representative and knowledgeable about community violence issues.

5. Financial Implications and Sustainability:

Establishing and maintaining the proposed grant program requires significant financial investment. Opponents will question the sustainability of funding these initiatives, especially if the outcomes do not demonstrably reduce community violence in the targeted areas.

In conclusion, the intent of SB1015 is reducing community violence and as such is commendable. However, opponents raise legitimate concerns about redundancy, exclusion of law enforcement agencies, muddled efficacy standards, administrative complexities, and financial sustainability.