



April 9, 2025

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1015

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon). The ACLU of Oregon is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 44,000 members and donor supporters statewide.

We strongly support Senate Bill 1015, which would create a grant program to fund community violence intervention (CVI) programs. **This legislation offers a vital, evidence-based, and equity-centered approach to reducing community violence without expanding systems of incarceration or surveillance.**

For too long, Oregon has relied on punitive responses to violence that have failed to address its root causes—poverty, systemic racism, and the lasting impacts of disinvestment in communities of color. SB 1015 acknowledges these realities and proposes an alternative: investment in community-led solutions. The bill tasks the Oregon Department of Justice with developing and administering a grant program to fund local efforts that have a demonstrated ability to reduce violence through non-carceral means. These efforts may include street outreach, violence interruption, crisis intervention, and trauma-informed support—approaches that have been shown to reduce shootings and improve community well-being ([Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions](#)).

SB 1015 prioritizes funding for organizations embedded in the communities they serve, recognizing that these groups are best positioned to foster trust and deliver effective intervention. Importantly, the bill establishes an oversight board that includes survivors, researchers, and community leaders—ensuring transparency and community accountability in both the grant-making process and program evaluation.

It is particularly noteworthy that SB 1015 lists Tribal governments as eligible grant recipients. Tribal Nations have long been marginalized in public funding structures despite experiencing disproportionately high rates of violence and systemic under-resourcing. The inclusion of Tribal governments not only expands access to essential resources but affirms Tribal sovereignty and the importance of centering Native-led approaches to public safety. In Oregon and across the country, Native communities face some of the highest rates of interpersonal violence and homicide ([National Institute of Justice, 2016](#))—conditions that demand culturally grounded, community-specific solutions.

Programs like those envisioned in SB 1015 are already demonstrating success. In Portland, where local investment in CVI efforts has increased, gun homicides declined by 21% from 2022 to 2023 ([City of Portland, 2024](#)). These results highlight what research has long shown: community-based interventions save lives and build long-term safety more effectively than reactive policing.

By shifting resources toward community-rooted public health strategies, SB 1015 represents a critical step in advancing racial justice, affirming Tribal sovereignty, and building safety through care, not punishment.

We urge the committee to support SB 1015 and invest in the kinds of transformative solutions that Oregon communities not only need but deserve.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
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