

Submitter: John Childers

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1516

Dear Chair Bowman and the House Rules Committee:

I am presenting testimony in support of SB 1516A due to the significance of its pretrial release provision for the safety and security of Oregon's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. In recent years, Asian American households throughout Oregon—including Lane County—have been targeted by organized burglary groups that deliberately select victims based on racial identity, conduct extensive surveillance, and carry out coordinated actions when families are not present. These incidents are systematic, cross-jurisdictional, and structured to maximize profit while minimizing exposure to legal consequences. Documentation from the Asian American Council of Oregon, as well as law enforcement reports and court records, indicate that repeated pretrial releases and subsequent absconding have hindered victims' access to justice and perpetuated this criminal pattern.

The impact on the AAPI community extends beyond material loss. Families report concerns about personal safety within their homes, hesitation to attend work or cultural functions, and apprehension regarding heightened vulnerability due to public identification as Asian. Community members who have not experienced burglary themselves note persistent anxiety and diminished confidence in the justice system when defendants, despite evident flight risks and threats to community safety, are released pending trial.

SB 1516A neither mandates detention nor compromises due process; it equips judges with the ability to make individualized assessments based on tangible risks. Granting courts the discretion to consider flight risk and potential danger in such cases is vital for protecting at-risk communities, enhancing trust in judicial processes, supporting crime reporting, and ensuring all individuals can maintain safety within their residences.

Please approve the passage of SB 1516A