

Submitter: Jenny Jonak
On Behalf Of: Asian American Council of Oregon
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1516

Dear Chair Bowman and Members of the House Rules Committee:

My name is Jenny Jonak, and I am a Korean American resident of Lane County for the past 20 years. I serve on the Board of the Asian American Council of Oregon, and I have been a practicing attorney for almost 30 years.

As part of my work with the Council, the Asian American Council of Oregon has supported crime victims who have had their homes burglarized and has held public safety forums with the community. We have had numerous such crimes throughout the state, including Lane County, with at least one residence in Lane County burglarized three times. This bill addresses fundamental gaps in the law that need to be addressed in order to protect victims.

Imagine coming home to find your house torn apart – belongings stolen, furniture toppled, everything turned inside out. Imagine learning that an organized crime ring intentionally targeted you because of your race, watched you through hidden cameras, and used Wi-fi jammers so that your security systems would not work.

Imagine that law enforcement arrests the people responsible. Charges are filed. But the defendants are released on minimal conditions, even though others in similar cases already fled and never returned to face trial, because the judge cannot weigh flight risk as a factor. And predictably – they flee. You recover nothing, and you're left wondering why you ever reported the crime at all.

This bill gives victims a fighting chance to protect themselves and their homes. Without it, we waste enormous law enforcement resources, lose accountability, and undermine faith in our justice system – especially in communities who already struggle to trust it.

If you read the testimony submitted, you can get a small sense of the impact that these crimes have had on the AAPI community. There are heart-breaking accounts from victims and their families and heart-warming letters of support from their allies. This is the tip of the iceberg, and if you were to visit Lane County, you would hear more.

I don't want to go back to our community and explain why we could not get this done or why more families have to be harmed before we act. Please pass SB 1516A. I don't want to look another victim in the face and explain why we couldn't.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jenny Jonak
Eugene, Oregon