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## **OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 463 May 8, 2012**

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Oregon Anti-Crime Alliance has reviewed SB 463 and has significant reservations about this proposed law for the following reasons:

1. Criminal laws, be they legislatively or initiatively created, are designed to apply to all people regardless of race or ethnicity. Criminal laws regulate the conduct of everyone. It is the conduct of the individual, not their race or ethnicity, which matters. We understand that the over representation of minorities in the criminal justice system-both as offenders and victims-is a significant issue. The root causes of this over representation should be analyzed and if possible, eradicated. Racial and ethnic impact statements on proposed criminal laws which regulate everyone's conduct do not help in this eradication effort. Actually they may have unintended consequences by chilling the passage of a law improving the criminal justice system and making Oregonians safer.
2. Only a legislator can request an impact statement. This leads to no consistency of application as proposed criminal laws are put forth. It is easy to see how a legislator might use the process to try to promote or stop a proposed law. In essence, one legislator can significantly impact the work load of the Criminal Justice Commission should they decide to do so.
3. Regarding state measures on the ballot, voters are already inundated with various statements and arguments. The Voter's Pamphlet already contains the Result of "Yes" Vote; the Result of "No" Vote; the Summary; the Estimate of Financial Impact; the Explanation of Estimate of Financial Impact; the Text of Measure; the Explanatory Statement; Arguments in Favor; Arguments Against and in some circumstances, a Statement from the Citizen's Initiative Review panel. In short, Oregonians have more than enough information in the Voter's Pamphlet. If a legislator or another person feels strongly about having a racial and ethnic impact statement in the Voter's Pamphlet, they can produce one and purchase space in the pamphlet as other Oregonians do.
4. The bill does not require the racial and ethnic impact statement to describe the effects of proposed legislation on crime victims. It only requires an estimate of the racial and ethnic composition of the crime victims who may be affected. See page 1, lines 22-24 of the bill.

For the above reasons, we recommend the Oregon Legislature not pass SB 463.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug Harclerod". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Harclerod  
Senior Policy Advisor