



**JOHANNA K. BLACKFORD**

919 SE 15th Ave  
Portland, OR 97214

T 503-869-3975  
johanna@pdx.edu

March 8th, 2013

Joint Ways Means, General Government Committee:  
Co-Chair Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair Smith,  
Sen. Johnson, Sen. Whitsett, Rep. Gombert, and Rep. Nathanson

Re: Testimony on Funding for the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office

I am writing in strong support of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions, their tireless work on behalf of Oregonian communities of color and women, and in support of their respective budget supporting the invaluable work of the two person Oregon Advocacy Commission Office staff. I am a doctoral student in Education Leadership with the Graduate School of Education at Portland State University and am concurrently working with the Oregon Advocacy Commissions as a Public Policy Intern on Education Gaps.

In my experience, the work of the Oregon Advocacy Commission Office (OACO) has been instrumental in providing the leadership necessary for leveraging and bringing together community resources in support of Oregon's current focus on building educational equity and excellence across the state. Through the Public Policy Internship on Education Gaps, the OACO has connected resources of Portland State University Graduate School of Education, with Advocacy Commissioners to work collaboratively in support of the Oregon Education Investment Board mission and goals. This unique partnership is bringing about tangible results in the form of jointly developed equity focused issue briefs, building positive cross-community relationships, while at the same time developing my personal capacity as an educational leader work on behalf of all Oregonians at the state policy level. Experiences such as this are critical for the ongoing development of an engaged, collaborative, and inclusive public process necessary for building a strong and united Oregon.

I encourage your continued support of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and their budget. Their work functions as a necessary and effective link between the Commissions respective constituents and Government, supporting leadership in building equity across the state through public policy.

Sincerely,  
Johanna K. Blackford, M.S., O.C.T.

*Public Policy Intern - Education Gaps*  
Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office  
*Adjunct Instructor | Doctoral Student - Education Leadership*  
Graduate School of Education | Portland State University