

TINA KOTEK
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 44
NORTH/NE PORTLAND



Testimony in Support of House Bill 2002
House Committee on Judiciary

Speaker of the House Tina Kotek
March 30, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support for creating a strong state policy to eliminate profiling in law enforcement encounters. This is an extremely important statewide issue, one which speaks to core Oregon values such as fairness, justice, and the freedom to be who you are no matter where you live in our state.

The -1 amendment to House Bill 2002, which will be presented today, will replace the bill. House Bill 2002 will serve as the omnibus profiling bill for the session, combining the topics raised in the other two bills also introduced this session (HB 2001 and HB 2003).

I would like to recognize all the individuals attending today and those at home watching the live feed. Thank you for sharing your stories with us and with advocates from the Center for Intercultural Organizing who have been spearheading this conversation for more than a year. Profiling is a complex and difficult topic. The bill before this committee today seeks to address a real problem in a fair and respectful manner.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of law enforcement officers in our communities and thank all of these dedicated public servants for their commitment to keeping our communities safe. This bill is about strengthening public trust between law enforcement and many different communities, something that is important for law enforcement so they are able to do their job as effectively as possible.

Conceptually, I support the -1 amendment before you. I appreciate the hard work that community advocates and law enforcement stakeholders have put into producing this amendment for today. However, I want to express my concern about excluding interactions that can be defined as “mere conversation” from the definition of profiling. While I understand the intent of this language is to clarify the ability to do community policing, I think this language is too broad. By excluding “mere conversation” from the definition of profiling, we prevent the potential substantiation of profiling complaints that involve community/police interactions that occur before a stop or an arrest. I think it is important to remove or alter this language to ensure we can have the best reporting possible. The data collected by the Law Enforcement Contacts Policy and Data Review Committee should include profiling complaints about interactions that are not stops, searches, or arrests.

I encourage you to put yourselves in the shoes of the people who will share their personal stories with you today. If done right, House Bill 2002 will help to create a more fair and just Oregon for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration of this important bill.