

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
"Advocating Equality and Diversity"
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Testimony in Support of HB 2704A
June 2, 2015, Hearing Room 343, 8:30 am
Senate Judiciary Committee

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Kruse, and Senators Burdick, Gelser, and Thatcher:

The Oregon Commission for Black Affairs, in its role of advocate for communities of color in Oregon, strongly supports HB 2704A.

The OCBA believes that clarity on citizen rights are important in every area and especially for both citizens and officers who are present for or engaged in a police action.

HB 2704A is such a bill. It clarifies that police officers should not expect their interactions with the public to be private. It also clarifies that the mere act of recording the public work of a police officer does not by itself constitute interference and should not draw an accusation of interference or actions such as confiscation of cameras. It leaves alone the understanding that a person cannot actually interfere with the duties of a police officer. The OCBA has heard testimony that cameras and other recording devices have occasionally been taken from citizens by police officers in order to stop the recording, and returned when no actual interference can be claimed. HB 2704A clears this up explicitly, and by calling this out explicitly in statute is likely to make this distinction a training priority.

The Oregon Commission on Black affairs joins with our community partners and urges an Aye vote on HB 2704A.

Sincerely,

James Manning, Chair

OR Commission on Black Affairs

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