



March 3, 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

We write today to express our strong support for HB 2355. As the grassroots arm of the women's movement, NOW's purpose is to take action through intersectional grassroots activism to promote feminist ideals, lead societal change, eliminate discrimination, and achieve and protect the equal rights of all women and girls in all aspects of social, political, and economic life. HB 2355 aligns with our commitment to identify and fight against those barriers to equality and justice that are imposed by racism.

We thank the legislature for passing a ban on police profiling in 2015. However, more is needed. There is no structure in place to effectively identify, record and correct any profiling practices by Oregon law enforcement agencies. We know that people are profiled based on race, ethnicity, national origin, language, housing status, sexual orientation or gender identity, but we cannot change this unless we begin to collect data on all officer-initiated pedestrian and traffic stops and use this data to provide updated and regular training to all levels of law enforcement. We also need accountability measures and guidance for departments that need to correct patterns and practices of profiling. HB 2355 includes these necessary steps to continue to change the culture of policing, make neighborhoods safer, and communities stronger.

HB 2355 also addresses the collateral consequences of a profiling and disparities in convictions by reducing the charges for certain drug possession from a felony to a misdemeanor. This will help communities break the cycle of incarceration and recidivism, which disproportionately impacts communities of color.

NOW chapters in Oregon urge you to take the next step to end profiling and support HB 2355.

Sincerely,

*Lisa Frack for the Oregon state chapter of the National Organization for Women (Oregon NOW)*

*Sheila Swinford for Central Oregon Coast NOW*

*Bud Feules for Greater Portland NOW*

*TeriAnn Mason for High Desert NOW (chapter in formation)*

*Laurie Notaro for South Willamette Valley NOW*