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Governor



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Testimony in support of the SB 280 Oregon Studies
March 14th, 2017, Hearing Room C, 3:00pm
Senate Education Committee

Chair Roblan and Vice Chair Linthicum and Senators Gelser, Hass and Kruse:

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs and Commission for Women support SB 280 for funding to establish curriculum and professional development of inclusive history studies in Oregon classrooms. Inclusive history curriculum will build on previous efforts by leading legislators including SB 739 (2013) and SB 602 (2011), to include the contributions statewide of people of color and women in public school K-12 education. We believe this bill is an important, and long planned step in building needed references to the historical figures and events of Oregon, and an investment in increasing graduation rates among students of color as well. The legislature has a record of hearings for over five years on this subject but requires the real investment in inclusive social studies. The Advocacy Commissions applaud the Education Committee's willingness to review and pursue this bill and related funding this session.

The legislature has worked successfully to build a strong foundation for SB 280. Oregon Social Studies teaching in school has been legislatively mandated to increase the inclusion of history of all Oregonians in its curricula for each grade, but this bill will allow the updated materials, training of faculty, and other resources be made available to accomplish the goal and achieve the improved student outcomes that inclusive social studies bring. The Oregon Advocacy Commissions have served as advisors to the ODE on a more inclusive curriculum for all Oregonian students and we will continue to support this important work, making ourselves available to the legislature and ODE in helpful ways.

We are excited by what Oregon students stand to gain from this bill. Experiencing the inspiration of learning about the Japanese American heroes of World War 2 who left their families in Oregon Internment Camps to become the most decorated units in history, to African American loggers who built the Oregon lumber industry from their base in Enterprise at the turn of the last century, and Hispanic farm workers who together built Oregon's historic eminence in timber, produce, and nursery products, is critical knowledge to have. These and other contributions in Oregon's success by leaders of color and women in education, law, medicine, arts, business, government, and in every historic milestone in our state are the foundation of inspiring studies in Oregon history that will build the next generation of leaders.

This legislation will provide the necessary funding to achieve the goals and purposes of inclusive history pedagogy in the Oregon's public school classrooms. The earmarked funding will enable

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the Oregon Department of Education to provide staffing and resources in working with school districts to create a systematic plan for professional development and curriculum development for inclusive lessons of the history and contribution of all Oregonians.

Thank you for your positive consideration of SB 280 as a key next step in this work.

Sincerely,



Mari Watanabe, OCAPIA Chair



James Morris, OCBA Chair



Alberto Moreno, OCHA Chair



Dr. Barbara Spencer, OCFW Chair