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Sen. Floyd Prozanski
Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Chair
900 Court St. NE, S-415
Salem, OR 97301
RE: SB 356

Dear Sen. Floyd Prozanski,

On behalf of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), we urge you to support SB 356, a bill that would update Oregon's intimidation crime law to include ethnicity and gender and would direct law enforcement agencies to report statistics to the Department of Justice. Additionally, within the statute, these crimes will be referred to as "bias" crimes rather than crimes of "intimidation."

Dedicated to combatting anti-Semitism, prejudice, and bigotry of all kinds, ADL has been at the forefront of efforts to deter and counter bias crimes over the past three decades. Such crimes have a special emotional and psychological impact, expanding beyond the individual victim. When a perpetrator intentionally targets an individual for a crime because of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability, it also harms the group of people who share that person's characteristic. It sends a message that they are not safe, that they are not welcome. Because hate crimes cause unique and extraordinary harm, they require unique tools to respond to them. In recognition of that, SB 356 ensures that Oregon law has comprehensive and inclusive protection from bias-motivated crimes

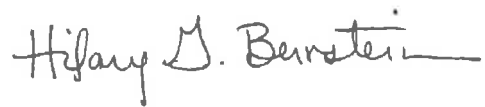
Although Oregon's hate crime law covers crimes in which the victim is targeted because of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and other characteristics, it fails to cover crimes in which the victim is targeted because of ethnicity and gender thereby leaving Oregon's ethnic and transgender communities unprotected. Inclusion of these categories is essential especially in light of the fact that in 2015, crimes directed against LGBT people increased almost four percent, from 1,017 to 1,053 – and, in just the third year of data collection on crimes directed against individuals on the basis of their gender identity, the numbers increased from 98 in 2014 to 114 in 2015 – now almost two percent of all hate crimes. From 2014 to 2015, the number of reported hate crimes based on ethnicity also increased by 3.6%. Best practices on hate crime laws, response, and training – including the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) model policy and the FBI's Hate

Collection Guidelines and Training Manual – include both ethnicity and gender.

ADL also supports SB 356 because it includes the vital directive to law enforcement agencies to report statistics regarding bias crimes to the Department of Justice. Participation in hate crime reporting not only sends an important message that an agency is ready and willing to respond to bias-motivated violence but also allows the jurisdiction to craft the most effective response based on the data.

Ultimately, no Oregonian should be targeted for a crime simply because of who they are. We strongly urge you to support SB 356.

Sincerely,



Hilary G. Bernstein
ADL Regional Director, Pacific Northwest