



April 13, 2017

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

We respectfully request your support for HB 3266. Established in 1945, the Urban League of Portland's mission is to empower African Americans and others to achieve equality in education, employment, health, economic security and quality of life. We support the passage of HB 3266 because it is essential that we work to keep our schools as places of learning, not punishment.

Schools must do everything possible to ensure that all children can learn and develop in programs that promote academic achievement. Our community's responsibility is to ensure that schools foster learning in safe environments for all children. Restraint and seclusion should be avoided to the greatest extent possible without endangering the safety of students, educators, and staff. The use of restraint and seclusion can be incredibly dangerous and in some instances result in death. There is also no evidence that using restraint or seclusion is effective in reducing the occurrence of problem behaviors.

Teachers, administrators, and staff must strive to work with and understand individual students' behaviors. Building effective behavioral supports in schools requires investment from the whole school, focus on preventing problem behavior when possible, and reviewing behavioral data and research that can be regularly adapted to school procedures. Black students, particularly those with disabilities, are disproportionately subject to seclusion or restraints.

The Urban League of Portland supports HB3266 because it will ensure that all students can grow and learn in a safe school environment.

Thank you,

Amira Streeter
Policy and Advocacy Director