

Co-chairs Courtney and Kotek and Members of the special committee,

My name is Autumn Shreve and I am president of AFSCME Local 2805 Multnomah Defenders. Thank you for the opportunity to provide oral and written testimony on portions of LC 45 regarding pretrial detention during the COVID 19 pandemic. While there are several reasons the language in LC 45 is troubling, I will be focusing on the potential unintended consequences.

We submit to you that this change in Oregon Law will disproportionately affect Oregonians who are black and Indigenous people of color, poor, and otherwise disenfranchised. This is because they are the groups of individuals least likely to be able to afford bail. All of the people this bill would impact have a bail amount.

Oregon typically has had robust protections against excessive pre-trial detention and that is why we have not had stories like that of Kalief Browder.

Kalief Browder was a young black man living in the Bronx in NYC when he was arrested and charged with Robbery. He was held for nearly 3 years pre-trial. His case was delayed over and over again because the State kept saying they were not ready for trial.

During these 3 long years he was offered plea deals, to resolve his case, the final one, which would have released him that day Mr. Browder would not take the plea, he proclaimed his innocence and wanted his trial. Two and one half months after that offer his charges were dismissed and he was released. Having missed the last 2 years of HS and all that comes with that and having been subjected to 2 years of solitary confinement in Rikers along with mental, physical and sexual abuse that he had sustained in jail.

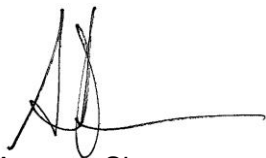
Two years after Kalief's release, just 1 week after his 22nd birthday, he committed suicide in his mother's home. A direct result of this time he spent in jail awaiting his day in court.

His case is an indictment on both the conditions at Riker Island Jail and the fact that he had to wait 3 years, in jail, to get a resolution.

We don't want a story like Kalief Browder's here in Oregon.

We need to protect the rights of those accused of a crime and not place the burden associated with the Covid-19 pandemic on their heads.

We have suggested language we can share and we ask you to take more time on this concept to address these concerns and thank you again for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Autumn Shreve', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Autumn Shreve

President

AFSCME Local 2805

Multnomah Defenders, Inc.