

Multnomah County Commissioner, District 2

June 23, 2020

Joint Interim Committee on The First Special Session of 2020
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Commissioner Susheela Jayapal is in Support of Police Accountability Legislation

Co-Chair Courtney, Co-Chair Kotek, Co-Vice Chair Girod, Co-Vice Chair Drazen, and members of the Committee.

My name is Susheela Jayapal and I am the Multnomah County Commissioner for District 2, North and Northeast Portland. Thank you for taking the time to read my comments in support of the Policy Accountability Legislation.

My district comprises some of the most diverse neighborhoods in Multnomah County, including the heart of the Black community in inner Northeast Portland. This community has withstood inequities for centuries, especially in our public safety system. In a 2019 analysis of key decision points done by the Burns Institute, they found significant disparities for our Black community and other people of color in Multnomah County. For example, people of color were 4.9 times more likely to be arrested, 4.8 times more likely to have a case issued for persecution, and 4.6 times more likely to have their cases result in a conviction. Our community is demanding change and I support those demands.

We have spent too long working within a system, created under white supremacy, around the belief that one race over all others deserves justice -- and it is long past time that we rethink that system. It is up to us, as elected officials, to work with the community to rethink our public safety system, with a recognition that we increasingly look to law enforcement to solve problems that are actually social problems, and that by doing that, we overuse punishment and incarceration--and that's an expensive and ineffective approach.

I encourage you to listen to the community and pass all five pieces of legislation. I also ask that you consider a change to statute ORS 423.570, which requires counties to charge supervision fees. These pieces of legislation are not the endpoint of the deep changes needed in our system, but it is a first

Susheela Jayapal

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step to bringing accountability and transparency to our public safety system as we work to reimagine our system as a whole.

Thank you, again, for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Susheela Jayapal
Multnomah County Commissioner, District 2