



CITY OF

PORTLAND, OREGON

Ted Wheeler, Mayor
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
Jo Ann Hardesty, Commissioner
Chloe Eudaly, Commissioner

August 5, 2020

Senate President Peter Courtney, Co-Chair
House Speaker Tina Kotek, Co-Chair
Joint Emergency Board
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear President Courtney, Speaker Kotek, and Members of the Joint Emergency Board,

As COVID-19 continues to spread in Oregon, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities are at increased risk of contracting and dying from COVID-19 due to systemic failures in our public health system and economy. Targeting precious state funds to communities experiencing the greatest impact, resulting from historic disinvestment, is a moral imperative.

We urge support for the \$45 million Racial Disparities Plan package to address social determinants of health contributing to the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has on Oregon's tribes and BIPOC communities. These investments will address unacceptable disparities in health outcomes and distribute resources based on the unique needs of each community.

We commend the Emergency Board for previous actions to establish and fund the Oregon Worker Relief Fund and the Oregon Cares Fund for Black Relief and Resiliency in recognition that many in our communities across the state are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. We must not stop at these efforts—the work is not done. Ongoing focus and decisive action are necessary to protect the health and well-being of BIPOC Oregonians. We continue to call on state leadership to allocate appropriate overall resources to support the safe and sustainable reopening and recovery of Oregon's most diverse communities.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed how deep and embedded our systemic health and economic inequities are and amplified how race, as well as income, education, food insecurity, housing, and other factors contribute to disparate health outcomes. As such, we urge approval for the Racial Disparities Plan package to continue supporting and uplifting BIPOC communities across Oregon.

Sincerely,

Ted Wheeler
Mayor

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner

Jo Ann Hardesty
Commissioner

Chloe Eudaly
Commissioner