

To the Oregon Legislature:

As a U.S. citizen and resident of Clackamas County, I am committed to supporting initiatives that make Oregon a better place in perpetuity.

In the last twenty years, I have witnessed a major transformation in the approach the State of Oregon has taken to support all Oregonians. Specifically, the focus on a better way forward for non-white individuals is encouraging. An example of this activity is the work of the People of Color Caucus and currently the BIPOC. Also, I commend the Oregon State Legislature in engaging in the work necessary to address societal issues relating to this segment of our population.

As a person of color, I am deeply troubled on a national level, by the abuse of power and reckless disregard for Black lives, especially men.

The 'license to kill' Black people must stop. As a former parole officer, who was licensed to carry a firearm, I arrested many parole violators who were convicted felons and sent them back to prison. In several of those cases, I found weapons in their possession, but I did not use unnecessary force, nor did I shoot anyone. I would have, had my life been in danger. Law enforcement personnel who resort to the use of deadly force when their lives are not threatened, are irresponsible and should not be on the force. There are many ways to subdue a person without killing them. Presumably, these techniques are taught at the Academy.

Historically, and most recently, we have seen numerous examples of white police officers using deadly excessive force on Black people, especially males. This is not evident when the subject is white. The explanation for this can be multifaceted but the foundational explanation is racism. It is imperative that states follow the lead of Colorado and enact laws to address this and other related issues of police accountability.

I call on Oregon to act now to end 'qualified immunity' as one example of an obstruction of justice that is too prevalent. I believe that most law enforcement personnel chose to do the right thing in most circumstances. However, changing the hearts and minds of individual law enforcement personnel is a noble goal, but the immediate need is to hold them accountable for abuse of their positions NOW!

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

Edward L. Brewington

Lake Oswego