

Dear Committee, & To Whom It May Concern,

Greater Portland National Organization for Women is strongly in support of Oregon HB2625. We are for improved data collection, across not just criminal justice, but all relevant OR state agencies, including but not limited to a study conducted by State Police, to determine how to increase state and local protective and investigative resources for tracking and investigating missing or murdered Native American women in Oregon.

We are aware that Native women are among the most abused and least protected of all cultural and racial groups in our state, and we strongly support this effort to begin to take action to change that fact. Current data collection is inadequate. We urge better data collection on many fronts, including but not limited to race, tribal identification, cultural identity, cause of death, and additionally, data collection related to police accountability.

MMIW related data collection needs to be a coordinated effort, drawing on all available resources and engaging all affected communities, with women at the center. We support the declaration of emergency if needed, as this situation has already gone on too long with too little attention paid to our Native American sisters in distress.

In the absence of a Federal equal right amendment, we, as women, must stand up for ourselves and each other in every possible way, to ensure equal treatment under the law and access to equal measures of investigation by the Oregon State criminal justice system. Support for additional resources for the safety of First Nations women should be prioritized, NOW!

Thank you for recording the support of HB2625 by Greater Portland N.O.W.

Sincerely,

Kelly Caldwell
Boardmember of Greater Portland National Organization for Women