

# Oregon Student Association



April 29, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary  
From: Lizbeht Marquez  
RE: House Bill 2625

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lizbeht Marquez, I'm a student at Western Oregon University and I am a Policy Associate for the Oregon Student Association. The Oregon Student Association is a statewide organization that represents 130,000 students in Oregon whose mission is to work for an affordable and accessible higher education.

House Bill 2625 would direct the Department of State Police to study how to increase and improve criminal justice resources relating to missing and murdered Native American women in Oregon. According to a 2008 study funded by the Department of Justice, Native American women and girls are killed or trafficked at a higher rate than the rest of the U.S population, specifically they are 10 times more likely to be murdered as the national average. Although this should raise concern for the safety and well-being of Native women and girls, the Justice Department reported that only 13 percent of reported sexual assaults result in an arrest. In 2016, the National Crime Information Center also reported that there were 5, 712 cases of missing Native American women and girls.

The lack of awareness, research and resources help contribute to the epidemic of violence. Currently, there is a lack of effective response to violence against Native American women and girls by the criminal justice system. We should no longer continue to stand by and allow more Native American women and girls to go missing or be murdered. It is crucial that the legislature pass this bill in order to address the epidemic of violence Native American women and girls have faced and continue to face. Please remember that not only are these women missing, but they have left behind families who have not received closure and justice. Many are sharing their stories of loss today, so it is imperative to listen, but most importantly to take action so that more families do not experience the same loss.

This is why I support HB 2625, and encourage this committee to pass it.

Sincerely,

Lizbeht Marquez

## **OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

The Oregon Student Association (OSA) is a statewide, student-led advocacy and organizing non-profit established in 1975 to represent, serve, and protect the collective interests of students in postsecondary education in Oregon

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