



June 25, 2020

Co-Chairs Senator and Senate President Peter Courtney, and Representative and House Speaker Tina Kotek; co-Vice Chairs Senator Fred Girod and Representative Christine Drazen; and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of OR, we respectfully request your support for House Bill 4205.

Systemic racism is firmly rooted in the U.S. and today's injustices mirror our shameful history. There can be no justice or equality when black, indigenous and people of color are seen as less deserving of basic human and civil rights.

Most of our police officers undertake their responsibilities hoping they will they will serve and protect our communities. They do so with the knowledge that they risk their personal safety.

Unfortunately, even when bolstered by the formal training they receive in order to obtain their certification, "cop culture"<sup>1</sup> often takes over. Within this culture police officers understood only too well how things "really" work -- meaning that there is often a huge difference between what is said, i.e. the rules, and what actually takes place, i.e. the final outcome. I experienced the results of this process in my former career as a federal prosecutor and criminal defense attorney. Part of this culture includes the "blue wall of silence."

Requiring police officers to report police misconduct legitimizes those police officers who want to ensure that the police department they wanted to join is in fact living up to its promise -- and that the police officer who calls attention to misconduct won't be the one who is losing rank or reputation instead of the officer who committed the misconduct.

Importantly, House Bill 4205 also seeks to stop misconduct before it takes place. And it is fellow police officers who understand the stress of the job and, perhaps better than anyone, can recognize circumstances that might lead misconduct when they see it.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Garner  
*State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of OR*  
*Member, National AAUW Public Policy Committee*  
503-407-2341  
garner37@mac.com

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<sup>1</sup> See, L. Scott Silverii, Cop Culture: Why Good Cops Go Bad, 2014.