



Joint Committee On the First Special Session of 2020
June 25, 2020 at 10am
Oregon Advocacy Commissions: Joint Testimony on Policing
SB 1604
HB 4207
HB 4201
HB 4205
HB 4208
HB 4203

Co-Chairs Senator Courtney and Speaker of the House Kotek; Co-Vice Chairs Senate Republican Leader Girod and House Republican Leader Drazan; Members Senators Burdick, Frederick, Knopp, Prozanski and Thatcher; Members Representatives Bynum, Holvey, Lewis, Salinas and Stark,

The Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, and Commission for Women have invested decades of service to Oregon, providing public policy advising and advocacy, applied policy research, and leadership in the areas of disproportionate punishments, health and health care including mental health care, and education as well as other areas. We have actively pursued, with partners in community and government, data-driven and community-based solutions to the violence and illness that have blighted our communities and are crippling all of Oregon. We represent intersectional, and diverse voices of lived experience and expertise to provide an essential focus on the current crises of public health and policing. We believe that this is the moment for all of us, in community, business, and government, to make changes about what defines us as a state and as communities: safer, healthier, fairer and more just.

The Advocacy Commissions have prepared a Joint Statement reflecting our shared goals and commitment to Civil Rights. Our statement voices our conviction that we must engage on social and public problems in a way that respects, protects, preserves and defends the humanity of Black people, Indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, refugees, and marginalized communities throughout Oregon.

To understand these times and the complexities regarding historically marginalized communities, we believe that:

OR Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

Hussein Al-Baiaty, Co-Chair
Mohamed Alyajouri, Co-Chair
Bennie Moses Mesubed, VC
Legislative members:
Senator Michael Dembrow
Rep. Carla Piluso

OR Commission on Black Affairs

Jamal T. Fox, Chair
Lawanda Manning, VC
Legislative member:
Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence

OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs

Irma Linda Castillo, Chair
Dr. Daniel López-Cevallos, VC
Legislative member:
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Staff

Lucy Baker, Administrator
Nancy Kramer, Executive Assistant
Dr. Connie Kim-Gervey,
Researcher/Policy Analyst

- The COVID 19 pandemic and policing expose the deep and persistent levels of damage to our communities perpetrated by institutional racism.
- Policing is part of a broader set of systemic failures with disproportionate, dismal consequences for people of color, women and trauma survivors, and other marginalized communities.
- Triage is a response to crisis. It demands worst cases must be treated first.
- Justice and Equity require policies that are explicitly addressed to eliminating bias and providing the support necessary.
- Incremental efforts to change have proven ineffective and can no longer claim a constituency based in reason.

To address these issues is to lift decades of disparity and injustice, and cannot wait. Hence, we propose the following:

Public Policy Recommendations:

1. Ban chokeholds and all forms of neck restraints.
2. Curb the use of no-knock warrants to protect the lives of innocent people.
3. Shrink the scope of police responsibilities. Shifting responsibilities to entities and persons better equipped by training and experience to meet that need (e.g., social workers, school counselors).
4. Rebuild budgets to restructure investment in mental health and public health by shifting responsibility and funding towards
 - a. Methods and practices of violence interruption and
 - b. Community-based services of de-escalation of violence and mediation
 - c. Collaboration with care coordination, behavioral health supports, and other public health benefits that exist through Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO's)/health plan partners.
5. De-militarizing our communities and our schools. Officers must be trained to see themselves as guardians of civil society, not as warriors battling civilians. Over-policing through school resource officers (SROs) has not been shown to make schools safer, instead increasing suspensions, expulsions, and arrests, especially among students of color. Children cannot be targets of police action, however well intentioned, without lasting trauma to the school, the child and their families. There are other professionals better trained and equipped for that.
6. Ban officers with a history of racial bias, violence, or serious disciplinary actions from employment in policing and future public employment in any state agency. Documented histories of such must disqualify any applicant from all state public employment.
7. Require police departments to refuse donations from foundations that support race discrimination or militarization or do not survive the same scrutiny as the police department itself.
8. De-incarceration with a commitment to rehabilitation and re-entry support including provision of job training, housing and supportive care.

9. Require training or credentialing for police officers on de-escalation strategies and tactics of no less than 20 weeks. Track training completion, metrics, and key performance indicators of success for individual officers and overall.
10. Ban use of tear gas and rubber bullets as crowd control strategies. The significant injury and harm these militaristic weapons cause is reprehensible and devastating to community members who are struck by these airborne devices.

The Oregon Advocacy Commissions support the legislature in its ongoing work for police reform, and look forward to working in partnership.

In solidarity,



Jamal Fox, OCBA Chair



Irma Linda Castillo, OCHA Chair



Hussein Al-Baiaty and Mohamed Alyajouri
OCAPIA Co-Chairs



Robin Morris-Collin
OCFW Chair

Links to resources & information:

OHEA: <https://mailchi.mp/350bb9743679/ohea-reflections-and-resources-Blacklivesmatter?e=a98519540c>

Coalition for Communities of Color: <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/ccc-news/5-29-openletter>

Governor Brown: <https://www.myoregon.gov/2020/06/04/oregon-resources-racial-justice/>