



Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council

6401 SE Foster ▪ Portland, OR 97206

June 24, 2020

Co-chairs Speaker Kotek and President Courtney and members of the committee,

My name is Tony Lapiz, I am the political and policy strategist for SEIU, focusing on racial and economic justice. I am submitting this testimony regarding Senate Bill 1604 and House Bills 4201, 4203, 4207, 4205, and 4208.

SEIU represents more than 85,000 working Oregonians, including many who identify as Black, Indigenous and People of Color. We are committed to being an anti-racist organization and fighting for racial and economic justice. We know that until Black communities and other communities of color can thrive, none of our communities can truly thrive. We appreciate this committee recognizing the immediate need to address the harm, violence and systemic racism facing Black Oregonians and people of color. We especially want to thank the Legislature's People of Color Caucus for bringing forward policy proposals and continuing to lead on racial justice.

Issues of racial justice need to be at the forefront of all of our fights, and while urgent action is needed, we again join our community members in asking you to please reset this process in order to give these issues adequate time for consideration and community involvement before taking a vote.

The last several weeks has amplified that Black, Indigenous and People of Color are diverse and intersectional and, at the same time, have been left out of the policy making process for far too long. We urge you to remain committed to this fight, while also including the voices of the communities most impacted.

In addition to inclusion, the LC's proposed this week do not address critical issues that will help address police violence and ongoing systemic racism, namely:

1. Concepts to assist in funding reimagining safety efforts
2. Community oversight components
3. Concepts on qualified Immunity
4. Concepts on use of force standards
5. Concepts altering investigative function and makeup of the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST)

As a Union we stand firmly alongside Oregon's Black led community organizations who are urgently advancing solutions for change. In particular we want to elevate feedback on the LC's before you today, and legislative recommendations moving forward provided by Unite Oregon, PAALF Action Fund, the Urban League of Portland, Rose City Justice, and many more who are leading on this work on every front.

Like many Oregonians, SEIU members have been greatly impacted by three pressing, simultaneous crises: the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic crisis, and the epidemic of continuous violence against Black people and other communities of color. At this critical moment, SEIU is calling for a reckoning on our economy and democracy to disrupt centuries of racism, and we look forward to continued work over the coming months and years.

Thank you for your time today, and for considering these pieces of legislation.

Tony Lapidz, MPH
Political and Policy Strategist
SEIU