

June 25, 2020

To: Co-Chair Senator Peter Courtney
Co-Chair Speaker Tina Kotek
Vice-Chair Senator Fred Girod
Vice-Chair Representative Christine Drazan
Members of the Joint Committee On The First Special Session of 2020

From: Katie Rose, Executive Director, Oregon Support Services Association

RE: HB 4203 Requiring law enforcement agency notification to AG in certain instances

The Oregon Support Services Association (OSSA) is a collective of the 14 Support Services Brokerages currently operating across the entire state of Oregon. We serve adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) living in their own or family homes, providing them with the case management and supports needed to connect them to community resources and direct service providers where they live.

As our elected lawmakers, you have convened Special Session this week to consider changes to combat the police brutality against Black people that has so painfully grown to a local and national emergency. We want to offer our support for HB 4203, as a practical step toward keeping people of color with intellectual and developmental disabilities safe in their communities. The disproportionate incidence of police violence against people of color with disabilities is not often examined. There is no federal data on police violence against people with disabilities, but experts estimate around 30 to 50 percent¹ of people killed by police also have a disability. The intersection of race and disability too often combines to result in negative, violent, and deadly outcomes for these members of our community.

We see in HB 4203 a clear and logical case for putting an unaffiliated higher authority in charge of situations in which police officer actions have resulted in the death or qualifying injury of a citizen. Parallels to this exist in most forms of government or quasi-government, including IDD case management protective services cases, which cannot be investigated by their own internal agency staff. Providing this level of unbiased protection shores up our due process and protects people with IDD, especially people of color with IDD in Oregon.

Please support HB 4203 to pass during the current Special Session of 2020. Thank you for the opportunity to support the safe and equitable enforcement of law throughout Oregon with the introduction of this legislative concept.

¹ https://rudermanfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/MediaStudy-PoliceDisability_final-final.pdf