

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Policy for the Second Special Session:

I am writing on behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians relating to House Bill 4301. The Cow Creek Tribe has been following the policy discussion led by the Joint Committee on Transparent Police and Use of Force Reform and supports the work of this committee to address many social justice issues in Oregon's public safety system.

As other federally recognized tribes in Oregon have communicated, the Cow Creek Tribe urges an amendment to this legislation that recognizes the sovereignty of the Tribes as separate governments, many of which have their own police departments as part of tribal government services for their members.

The Tribe's values on use of force align with HB 4301 so the concern is not about the goals of the bill. The concern is the absence of recognition of the sovereignty of Tribes to establish their own policies for policing in Indian country when a Tribe has its own tribal government funded police department.

I know this session is short and there is limited time for amendments, but please consider adding language similar to what the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation has offered:

"In recognition of the sovereignty of tribal nations, nothing in this act applies to tribal officers or tribal law enforcement agencies."

If time cannot accommodate this amendment, please know that the Cow Creek Tribe cares about this issue and other public policy that promotes the education, health and safety of all Oregonians while also honoring the sovereignty of Tribal governments, and is committed to strengthening its government-to-government relationship with the state legislature so policies can advance to create a better Oregon while appropriately recognizing the tribes rights to self-govern.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you on this issue and others through the interim and into the 2021-22 legislative session.

Sincerely,

Anna Richter Taylor
For the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians

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