

Good afternoon Chair Golden and Smith and Members of the Subcommittee on General Government,

I have resided in Oregon my entire life and am aware that there is a deep history of racism in this state, that unfortunately continues to cause harm today. It is our job as a state to take direct action to center the needs of people who have been marginalized by our state's oppressive systems. In order to follow-through with good intentions, we need to fund the Oregon Advocacy Commission to be fully supported in doing the work of centering the voices of underrepresented Oregonians. We know that in Oregon, and across the nation, Communities of Color and Women are still not paid what they should be. How will this ever change if the advocates who represent these community members are also underfunded? We have much work to do towards equity, and funding the OACO is a crucial step.