



March 2, 2021

Co-Chairs Golden and Smith, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Oregon, we express our strong support for Senate Bill 5501.

The work of the Oregon Equity Commissions may not frequently vault to page one of our media outlets and often takes place behind the scenes, but their work on equity, leadership and public policy is nonetheless critical to the well-being of all the citizens in Oregon.

The Commissions regularly provide key information, collaboration and support to numerous individuals and organizations. The information is predicated on solid research and lived experience. They endeavor to bring all communities within their purview and, significantly, provide a much-needed forum for multiple viewpoints to be expressed, listened to and acted upon. By example and work they accomplish, the Commissions model the community leadership they endeavor to bring to Oregon.

The Commissions' voice is highly respected in the halls of the legislature. They are in fact often asked to submit testimony regarding a number of issues.

AAUW of OR fully supports funding for full time public affairs/community engagement and policy/research analyst positions. Without these positions, the Commissions' broad purview will be constricted and their mission more difficult to advance. The essence of the Commissions is community collaboration and engagement, and these tasks must be supported with sufficient funding.

We urge your support of Senate Bill 5501.

Respectfully Submitted,

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