



ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN NETWORK OF OREGON

March 2, 2021

The Honorable Senator Jeff Golden and Representative Greg Smith, Co-Chairs  
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on General Government  
900 Court St. NE, S-421  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Golden and Representative Smith,

On behalf of APANO, I am writing to express our strong support for SB 5501, which expands the OACO's capacity with additional staffing. APANO is a statewide, grassroots organization, uniting Asians and Pacific Islanders to achieve social justice. We use our collective strengths to advance equity through empowering, organizing and advocating with our communities.

Over the years, we have worked closely with the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander affairs to ensure our communities have a voice in Salem. Serving on the commission has been a valuable leadership opportunity made available to many of our community members. Many of those commissioners have become valuable leaders within Oregon's civic leadership. Together, we have jointly advocated for policies that have made a real impact on the lives of Oregon's Asian and Pacific Islander community, including in increasing access to health care coverage for Pacific Islander communities, data disaggregation, and in improving educational attainment.

Today, as the pandemic disproportionately impacts Pacific Islander, Black, and Latinx communities and there is a surge of hate and bias incidents toward Asian Americans, the OACO's voice is needed now more than ever. The capability of doing deeper engagement and policy research and development will greatly serve our communities in the years ahead as we all work towards shared solutions. We strongly advocate for this investment in community leadership. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Duncan Hwang  
Associate Director  
APANO