

My name is Ekene Avery and I lived in Oregon from 1993-1999. As a young African-American man, growing up in Oregon in the 1990s, was difficult. Racism was overt and I experienced it frequently while living in Beaverton and Tualatin. We need well-funded programs to ensure that the next generation of Oregonian children-of-color do not experience the same level of discrimination that was prevalent during my time there. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 5501 and hope that the funds will be allocated to the Oregon Advocacy Commission Office.

Martin Luther King said that, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." We are seeing the fruit of these efforts in the nation-wide protests against racial injustice but that is only the beginning. Comprehensive programs and efforts to address racial inequality must be developed and administered and there must be well-qualified staff to do it. Please do not miss this opportunity to fund positive social change. Oregon needs it. This nation needs it.

Thank you,