

ELIZABETH STEINER HAYWARD MD
STATE SENATOR



OREGON STATE SENATE
DISTRICT 17

February 24th, 2021

Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation

Re: Support for SJR 10

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee:

I am writing today to ask for your support of SJR 10. I believe that this bill is essential in both the process of addressing Oregon's history of systemic racism and also for the process of moving Oregon into an anti-racist future. This proposed amendment would remove the antiquated language of slavery from the Oregon Constitution. Currently, Article 1, Section 34 of our State Constitution reads, "There shall be neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude in the State, **otherwise than as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.**" This exception clause allows for the constitutional classification of incarcerated individuals as slaves, denying our incarcerated communities dignity and humanity, while perpetuating historic racism. This change in language is an essential step towards amplifying the message that Oregon is committed to being actively anti-racist. We believe it is imperative that Oregon take this proactive step to demand a more just and equitable future, wherein everyone has the rights, resources, and recognition needed to thrive.

I urge this Committee to vote yes on SJR 10.

Sincerely,

Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward MD
SD-17

