



**Service Employees International Union – Oregon State Council**  
6401 SE Foster ▪ Portland, OR 97206

March 18, 2021

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Noble and Power, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2169 to improve public safety in Oregon and reform our criminal justice system by adopting the recommendations of the Racial Justice Council. My name is Alberto Gallegos and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Oregon. SEIU Oregon is composed of SEIU Local 503 and SEIU Local 49, which together represent over 85,000 people. Local 49 represents private sector janitors, property service workers, light manufacturing, and healthcare workers; while Local 503 represents homecare workers, private nonprofit workers, in-home childcare providers, nursing home workers, and state and local government employees.

The status quo simply doesn't work for many of us—women, people of color, LGBTQ communities, immigrants and working families. Due to this, SEIU came together with other labor unions and community partners to create the Fair Shot for All Coalition in 2014. The goal of the Coalition is to fight for economic justice for Oregonians, with a focus on the disproportionate impact economic inequality has on people of color, immigrants, and women. As members of the Fair Shot For All Coalition, **we strongly support this bill as part of our ongoing work towards achieving racial justice in Oregon.**

The whole premise of public safety is to make the public feel safe. However, Oregon's criminal justice system continues to disproportionately detain, criminalize, and harm communities of color. Oregon must approach public safety and police accountability with a racial justice lens that provides transparency and accountability and restores Oregonians who are impacted by the criminal justice system.

HB 2169 includes recommendations from the Criminal Justice Reform & Police Accountability Committee of the Governor's Racial Justice Council. In response to the long overdue national and local uprising for racial justice sparked by the death of George Floyd in 2020, the Council is moving Oregon forward by centering Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and immigrant voices in the development of public safety policy solutions.

The proposed reforms would accomplish the following:

- **Promote restorative justice:** Encourage greater use of restorative justice practices with funding provided to the Criminal Justice Commission
- **Prevent unnecessary deportations:** Make diversion possible for immigrants accused of crime, so they can perform community service, pay restitution and/or receive treatment in their community, rather than automatic deportation and traumatic family separation.
- **Expand police oversight:** Authorize the creation of a police oversight agency or board by city and county governments
- **Improve transparency:** Improve public access to personnel files for police officers who have been investigated for misconduct

- **Require police identification:** Require law enforcement officers to inform a stopped person of reason for the stop and that they have the right to refuse a request to search
- **Ensure informed police searches:** Require law enforcement officers to provide name and badge number if the stop doesn't result in an arrest or citation.

In our union, we believe in and fight for our vision for a just society: where all workers are valued and all people respected, no matter where we are from or the color of our skin; where all families and communities can thrive; and where we leave a more just and equitable world for generations to come.

The policies developed by the Criminal Justice Reform and Police Accountability Committee will make all of us safer by centering those who are most disproportionately harmed by our criminal justice system. Together, we can make Oregon a place where we all have a fair shot and feel safe. **SEIU Oregon urges you to vote yes on HB 2169.**

Thank you,

Alberto Gallegos  
Political and Government Relations Organizer  
SEIU, Oregon State Council