

HB 2986 in support
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation
May 11, 2021 at 8:30am

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, Senators Dembrow, Gelser, Heard, Linthicum and Manning Jr.,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share my experience with you, as it is a very humbling experience for me.

I am Natasha Haunsperger, a Commissioner with the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW), and in my other role, I'm also a Police Officer with the Portland Police bureau. I applied for an appointment to the OCFW because of their active commitment to public policy and its intersection with justice-involved women and their continuous advocacy for social change and promoting human rights and gender rights.

I am firmly expressing my support and endorsement of HB 2986 that requires the Board of Public Safety Standards and Training (BPSST) to ensure that police officers and certified reserve officers are trained to investigate, identify, and report crimes motivated by prejudice based on the perceived gender of a victim.

In the most recent history, our state has achieved pivotal accomplishment and strides to farming hate crimes and bias incidents in the most holistic and inclusive framework. In January 2021 the state of Oregon adopted new hate and bias crime law that created a foundation for improving data reporting and access for reporting instances of hate and bias incidents. This led to the innovative creation of the statewide hotline, where victims of bias crimes and incidents can report their victimization, thus supplementing the option to report online on the Oregon Department of Justice website.

In 2019, the passage of SB 577 enhanced the existing hate crime statute by including gender identity as a protected category, in addition to the traditionally accepted and defined groups. By adding "gender identity" to the "list of characteristics of the victim, perception of which constitutes defendants' motive to commit crime," the statute is reinforced and encompassing of a new demographic of possible victims that are now protected by the law.

These steps are significant and deserving of acknowledgment, yet the next step is as important and more challenging – implementing these legislative changes in police policies, training, and practices. To ensure these changes are timely, accurately, and immediately conveyed and introduced to the end-users, the state law enforcement agencies, the BPSST has the opportunity to build clear language and a direction for the development of a tailored training curriculum that would inform police officers of these changes. In addition, as HB 2986 proposes a mandatory training and education of law enforcement on this issue, the BPSST has the opportunity to develop and foster a learning culture and environment that

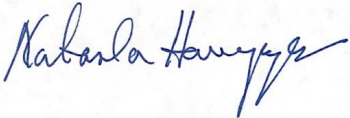


would allow police officers and those working in a law enforcement capacity to be educated, informed, trained and held accountable for adherence and implementation of these legislative changes.

Police officers would benefit immensely from receiving culturally responsive and tailored training on gender equity to comprehend the gravity of reported incidents better and be in the position to provide an improved and more empathetic response and service to impacted communities. I would also propose that such training is based and framed on the pillars of gender inclusion theories. The introduction of gender identity frameworks through human story sharing cannot only provide a holistic lens and but also legitimacy. Still, it would also be very impactful and would remove social barriers and existing divides between community and police officers. It would promote officers' ownership and agency to work with the community to combat hate crime and bias incidents.

In summary, training should be mandatory to ensure that a newly developed training curriculum is accessible to all police departments. To go a step further, such training should be developed in tandem with communities with lived experiences. Community inclusion in training is the necessary step in addressing complex societal and justice reforms.

Thank you for your time today.



Natasha Haunsperger

