



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

June 24, 2021

To: [House Committee on Rules](#)  
[Representative Barbara Smith Warner](#), Chair

Re: [HR 6](#) – Declaring racism as a public health crisis in Oregon – **Support**

The national, state, and local [Leagues of Women Voters](#) stand together, fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in principle and in practice. DEI is central to the League’s current and future mission to engage all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers to strive toward a more perfect democracy. Where systemic racism thwarts these societal norms, the results can be tragic, for example, in the public health arena, causing outsized harm, trauma, illness, and death. The League supports HR 6, calling for the Oregon Legislature to declare and resolve that racism is a public health crisis in this state.

Effectively addressing Oregon’s legacy of racism, from our white supremacist founding to today’s COVID related hate crimes, will not happen without substantial, intentional, and effective investment of time, expertise, and funding. Please see our comprehensive testimony for [HB 2337](#), which shares the HR 6 relating clause *verbatim*. HB 2337 lays out a thoughtful and effective blueprint to progress towards rectifying existing public health inequities caused by racism in Oregon.

You have before you today the opportunity to endorse this foundational statement of values that we as Oregonians should embrace. HR 6 lacks both a revenue impact and a fiscal impact. It is stripped of the careful directives in HB 2337 which has not progressed in this session. The time is long overdue to right Oregon’s historic and present racist climate. We urge your support for HR 6.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

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