

Joint Subcommittee on General Government
Re: SB 5501, Advocacy Commissions Office.

March 3, 2021

Co-Chair Golden, Co-Chair Smith, and fellow committee members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in strong support of appropriating funds from the General Fund to provide additional staff funding for Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office.

My name is Wei-Wei Lou, Chair of APANO (C4) Board. I strongly urge you to allocate more resources to support the state's effort in implementing equitable policies to ensure the success of the communities of color.

As an Oregonian of Asian background, I have experienced prejudice and discrimination personally and professionally. In many cases, I was excluded in activities, my daughter was excluded from friendship networks, and my husband was excluded from job promotions and repeated layoffs simply because he speaks with an accent.

I have also witnessed my Chinese friends being excluded and discriminated from being successful at their careers and businesses. In many cases, they have been ignored simply because they speak quietly and a bit shy. In other times, I was mistaken as someone 20 years younger although there were only two female Asian administrators in the district I was working at. Repeatedly, people ignored our clarification of who we were and still called us with different names. We were constantly ignored simply because we both looked Asian. Our individuality seemed to be totally invisible.

Most recently, thousands of anti-Asian hate crimes have been committed simply because someone looks "Asian" and have been on a bus or a public place. So many incidents happen to so many Asian Americans—it has become a domestic terror for people who look Asian.

For Oregon to be a safe place for all people to live, there is a need to strengthen the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office so the needs of people such as Asians and Pacific Islanders can be better met.

I am supporting Senate Bill 5501. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 5501.

Thank you,

Wei-Wei Lou
Beaverton, Oregon