

**Racial disparities permeate our criminal justice system  
African Americans represent 2% of Oregon’s population  
and 10% of the prison population.**

A lack of investment in culturally-specific services through the Justice Reinvestment program means Black and brown Oregonians aren’t benefiting from the services that would best serve them to stay out of prison.

A 2016 study out of Portland State University, *In Defense of Culturally-Specific Organizations: Understanding the Rationale and the Evidence*, shows that:

*“Three large comparative studies similarly find that culturally-specific services provide better outcomes for clients of color in the areas of being less likely to drop out of services, being more willing to return for service provision, using services more fully and being engaged in services for longer periods of time (Hohman & Galt, 2001; Takeuchi, Sue, & Yeh, 1995; Yeh, Takeuchi, & Sue, 1994).” [In Defense of Culturally-Specific Organizations: Understanding the Rationale and the Evidence \(scirp.org\)](#)*

Despite the proven benefits of culturally-specific organizations for communities of color, the data shows that some counties who receive JRI dollars have not successfully reduced racial disparities in the criminal justice system:

*“While our analysis showed an across-the-board reduction in the number of prison sentences, we also found that MCJRP did not reduce racial and ethnic disparity in sentences to prison. Specifically, we found Black and Hispanic offenders were more likely than white offenders to receive a prison sentence.” [Examining the Implementation of Justice Reinvestment in Multnomah County](#)*

Central City Concern operates several culturally-specific programs for exactly this reason - we have seen the difference in outcomes. Culture is best practice, and investing in these types of services through the justice reinvestment program will allow more programs to serve more people. This will lead to better outcomes for historically underserved communities across the state and to safer communities. If Oregon is to address the racial disparities present in the criminal justice system, making this investment is a critical step in the right direction.

**Support SB 1510**



Senator James I. Manning, Jr.  
Senate President Pro Tempore