



February 2, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Oregon Education Association

Re: Support for Transforming Justice, SB 1510

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Education Association represents over 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, from pre-k to community colleges. Our members are teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, nutrition specialists, community college professionals and more. OEA members are part of every community, district and county, and deserve to feel safe and be treated with dignity no matter what they look like.

Transforming Justice, SB 1510, is about reducing racial disparities and ensuring that the harm caused by our systems are actually making headway toward better solutions. Until we have a reality where communities feel safe by the law enforcement that claims to protect us, we need to limit unnecessary traffic stops.

Educators in Oregon are most interested in ensuring that students' natural curiosity and love of learning is continually nourished throughout their life in the classroom, and when things like traffic stops or police interactions effect students of color and their families we see how structural racism effects our members and that of their community, students and classroom environments.

We also have a continued dynamic in Oregon where communities that suffer the most from interactions with law enforcement also happen to be communities that are most underserved by our systems of courts, education, transportation, health providers and victim services. SB 1510 creates a justice reinvestment equity program to address racial disparities prevalent in Oregon's criminal justice system, and reduce prison use. Access to healing and treatment is an essential part of reducing recidivism rates and ensuring that we are thinking about the problem differently. By changing how public safety dollars are invested, communities across Oregon will have better access to the resources they need to begin to feel safe, heal, and rebuild their lives.

Please support SB 1510 and enact these critically needed changes that are aligned with Oregonians' vision for a public safety system rooted in racial equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Michele Ruffin

Oregon Education Association