



**NAYA Action Fund**

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To: Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business

RE: House Bill 1545 – Support

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Creeana Bort, I am a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, and I represent the NAYA Action Fund located in Portland, OR. Founded by the community for the community, NAYA Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization with a mission to expand political advocacy and build electoral power in partnership with the Native community. The NAYA Action Fund provides tools to shape public policy, cultivate leadership, and elect champions for issues impacting Native people. Our vision of systemic change is youth-centered, family-driven, and elder guided. I write in support of House Bill 1545.

We work with Native youth and adults to help foster career readiness and lifelong success. Native Americans are disproportionately underserved, resulting in higher unemployment rates than the average Oregonian. According to Multnomah County Poverty Report 2019, about one-third (28%) of Portland's population is BIPOC; however, people of color represent 44% of the county's population in poverty, with the Native American's sitting at 35% makeup. To help our community members who are struggling, our organization strives to create programs that provide valuable education and career resources accessible and practical. Fifty-six percent of adults within Multnomah County who identify as BIPOC are sitting with education less than a high school diploma, contributing to the inability to obtain jobs with wages that will provide them with proper security.

Funding from HB1545 will allow us to continue our work of supporting and uplifting our community members in need. Funding allocated from this Bill with help in our fight against barriers that are causing disproportionately higher poverty rates and educational barriers.

Sincerely,  
**Creeana Bort**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Creeana Bort".

Policy and Advocacy Organizer

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