

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee, my name is Shani Harris-Bagwell and I am a member of the Transforming Justice Coalition that brought HB 2002 forward last session and the same coalition that has been a partner in the development of SB 1510. The Transforming Justice Coalition is a group of people impacted by the criminal justice system, service providers, and policy advocates, who came together to make necessary changes to Oregon's criminal legal system.

After HB2002 didn't pass last session, Senator Prozanski convened a workgroup to determine how we could all work together to move this necessary and comprehensive policy forward. He convened numerous state agencies, members of the Transforming Justice Coalition, and members of the law enforcement community to work together to create SB1510. The coalition also deeply appreciates Senator Prozanski's success in creating a space for impacted people to participate. For many, this was their first time participating in the Legislative process. Thank you Senator for creating that space.

As you have heard the past few days, SB1510 is split into three sections. The first section reduces unnecessary interactions with law enforcement with changes to how stops and searches are made. The second ensures people on parole and probation are set up for success. The third section assures that we are investing in culturally-specific organizations and culturally-responsive service providers through the creation of the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program. The CJs HB 3064 report showed that culturally-specific programs are being completely overlooked by the JRI. NorthWest Health Foundation, who has existing, trusted relationships with culturally-specific organizations throughout the state, will administer this program and distribute funds directly to culturally-specific organizations and culturally responsive providers.

Today however, I want to focus on the stops and arrests bit. As a reminder: this law will prevent law enforcement officers from making a stop if a driver has a SINGLE headlight, tail light, brake light, or license plate light out and the other is functioning, making this a secondary offense. So, if the driver is pulled over for a separate traffic offense, the driver can still be cited for these equipment violations. It is important to note: if a public safety risk is present, for instance, if there is inclement weather, an officer can still initiate a stop for these equipment violations.

I'm going to take you on a trip that shouldn't be very exciting: pretend I'm a Black woman coming home from work, or on my way to school, when I see the lights behind me. I panic and start questioning myself. I wasn't speeding. I've broken no laws. My car is in good shape, my registration is up to date. I am now being told by an officer that one of my tail lights is out and they are asking for my license and registration. I reach to grab it from the glove box and am suddenly being told at gunpoint to exit the vehicle and am being violently arrested for resisting arrest. I think: what have I done to deserve this? What am I being arrested for? Why is this happening to me? The confusion and terror are overwhelming and all too common when traffic stops are the primary reason for civilian contact with a police officer.

What we are aiming to do with this bill is limit the contact people have with police and limit the reasons police can physically connect with civilians. This bill would mean that police can't stop you for a single broken headlight, taillight, brake light or a broken license plate light. It would mean that police would no longer have those excuses to stop Black women like Kendra James or men like James 'Jahir' Perez and Deonte Keller. And, if you didn't know, those are all Black people who were killed by police during routine traffic stops in Oregon.

There are many reasons why this section of the bill is important, but the main one is this: all Oregonians deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Period. This bill will prevent the kinds of stops that deeply traumatize and occasionally kill Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.

It is imperative that you support SB 1510. Thank you.