



February 3, 2022

Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: Testimony in Support for Transforming Justice 2022, SB 1510**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 1510 on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 28,000 members statewide.

For the past five decades, the United States has dramatically increased its reliance on the criminal justice system as a way to respond to drug addiction, mental illness, and poverty. Oregon is no different. As a result, the U.S. incarcerates more people, in both absolute number and per capita, than any other nation in the world. And our overreliance on incarceration does not impact everyone equally: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color are disproportionately affected by our mass incarceration system, a system that has transformed our society in harmful ways – damaging communities of color and low-income communities and wasting trillions of dollars. This needs to change.

Every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity. **Our communities are calling for urgent action to reimagine and transform public safety and address the structural racism that is at the root of our public safety and criminal legal systems.** The COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have exposed systemic injustices in stark light, and it is time to work towards a vision of public safety and criminal justice that is built on accountability, healing, and community.

The ACLU of Oregon is proud to be standing with community leaders from the Governor's Racial Justice Council, Transforming Justice Coalition, Fair Shot for All Coalition, and legislative leaders to reimagine safety for our communities. SB 1510 is critical to achieving Oregonian's calls that our state imagine and build a safer and more equitable Oregon.

The Transforming Justice 2022 (SB 1510) will:

**Reduce racial disparities in traffic stops.** Every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity. Unnecessary interactions between law enforcement and Black and brown Oregonians increase risks of harmful excessive force and violence in our communities. By changing how traffic stops are made, we can limit unnecessary traffic stops and make our communities safer.

**Improve success for people on probation and parole.** People who have been held accountable for harm should have a chance to succeed. Excessively long and burdensome parole and probation sentences disrupt a person's life, family, and employment, and prevent people from rebuilding their lives and thriving. These are barriers that disproportionately harm Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color. By eliminating unnecessary barriers for people on parole and probation, we can build on people's strengths and promote stable homes, families, communities, and economies.

**Create the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program.** All Oregonians should have access to healing, treatment, and safety. When we invest public safety dollars into our communities, we reduce prison use and recidivism and increase safety. Our current approach prevents essential public safety grant funds from meeting the needs of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color. By changing how public safety dollars are invested, communities across Oregon will have better access to the resources they need to rebuild lives and communities with the safety and healing needed for all Oregonians and our families and communities to be stable and thrive.

SB 1510 ensures that people who have caused harm are responsible and accountable for that harm, after which they would have an opportunity to rebuild their lives. It also ensures that crime victims and survivors have the resources they need to heal with the culturally-specific services needed by victims and survivors of color throughout Oregon.

SB 1510 is aligned with Oregonians' vision and values for public safety and criminal legal systems that are rooted in accountability, healing, and community – and justice, equity, and care for all.

**The ACLU of Oregon urges the committee members to support our state's commitment to racial justice by supporting SB 1510.**

Thank you,

Sandy Chung  
Executive Director  
ACLU of Oregon  
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