



Oregon Commission on Black Affairs

Advocating for Equity and Diversity throughout Oregon

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, and Federal and World Affairs,

The Law-and-Order Agenda created the New Jim Crow Era for Black People in Oregon. If we look back at the original Jim Crow Era, Black People racially, economically, and morally endured the following:

- Disenfranchisement
- 2nd class clientship
- Barriers to voting
- Barriers to education
- Barriers to employment
- Barriers to housing
- Barriers to healthcare

Our Oregon Territorial Legislature first passed a Black Exclusion Law in 1844. The law said that any free Black people who remained in the state would be subject to flogging if they did not leave within 3 years. The flogging was to continue every 6 months until they left Oregon Territory. The penalty was not less than 20 or more than 39 lashes. While strides have been made in the United States by Black people in the fields of economics, politics, and education, Black people fought for and achieved the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. These two laws made it so this colonized country could no longer discriminate based on skin color.

So how did the Law-and-Order Agenda create the New Jim Crow Era? For Oregon it started in 1859 when the state constitution forbade Black people from living, working, or owning property and under the Oregon constitution Black people were prohibited from voting. Our state constitution was not corrected until 1926 and the racial language was not removed from it until 2002. Not to mention Oregon resisted federal laws that gave its Black population rights. Although Oregon ratified the 14th Amendment in 1866 it rescinded that ratification in 1868. Oregon remained 1 of 6 states that did not ratify the 15th Amendment which granted Black men the right to vote. Oregon did not ratify the 15th Amendment until 1959 and did not re-ratify the 14th Amendment until 1973. Also, not to mention Oregon became a Klu Klux Klan hotbed. Oregon was home to the biggest Klan organization west of the Mississippi river with over 40,000 members in 50 chapters across the state.

We must look at and study all the examples of early day environmental racism where white Oregonians would flood towns leaving populations of 17,000 or more Black Oregonians homeless. As of 2023 Oregon's Black population is still just over 2 percent. This small number is not an accident.

**Oregon Commission on
Black Affairs**

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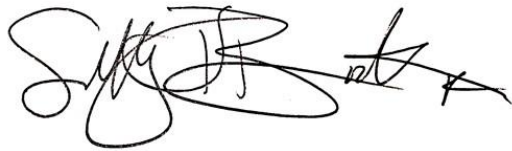
Oregon's 2 percent black population reflects the policies, practices, and ideologies in effect for more than 180 years.

Let's look at how the Law-and-Order agenda created the school-to-prison pipeline by increasing police spending and heavily decreasing education funding. In 1970 the US prison population was 300,000, today our prison population is 1.8 to 2.3 million which is a 700 percent increase.

The War On Drugs was really the War On Black People. In 1986 the Anti-Drug Abuse Act made it so that our judicial system could differentiate between powder cocaine and hard cocaine. This disproportionately impacted Black people. The 1994 Crime Bill came with the Truth and Sentencing Act, which led to higher incarceration rates and harsher sentencing for Black people. Now let's add this to Oregon's Measure 11 where 8 out of 10 people arrested were Black. One in three African American males compared to one in seventeen White Caucasian males carry the label Convicted Felon. As of 2023 convicted felons are the only people our judiciary system is legally allowed to disenfranchise.

Lastly, I would like to mention white conservatives and libertarians who were or are behind Oregon House Bill 544 are still today trying to hide and obscure Oregon's history. With all I just stated do I need to really say why the just over 2 percent Black Population in Oregon is overdue their reparations for the disenfranchisement, reparations for the 2nd class citizenship, reparations for the barriers to voting, reparations for the barriers to education, reparations for the barriers to employment, reparations for the barriers to housing, and reparations for the barriers to healthcare.


Respectfully in support for reparations for Black Oregonians, Vice-Chair for the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs,



Dr. Silky J. Booker



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