

Submitter: Megan Grace

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2995

As a Caucasian woman who has an Ebony partner I have experienced first hand how life moves differently for him in everyday life. Since starting to date this incredible human 4 months ago, he has been stopped without cause by the police 3 times, followed to his home late at night, and watched in a menacing way as he went in. It was a regular Tuesday evening and my partner was up fearing for his life. This is something that is current, it is horrifying to witness. And for me it has jsut been 4 months of seeing it, he has lived his whole life this way. This stress and pain has an effect on his body, mind, spirit and soul. He is such a special human, taking every opportunity to educate kindly those of us that are not living the Ebony experience so that we can find a better future together. He resists hate, even though he has every reason to live in fear and away from others. He deserves to be compensated for all of his unpaid emotional labor, and this bill feels like a step in that direction. My other good friend speaks of how 3 separate KKK body harm threats to her simply for existing made her almost crawl inside herself with fear. It took all her strength to even walk outside for a while. And to hear all the work she has done to now be a bright light in the community as a small business owner is nothing short of inspirational. I see and hear all the extra bandwidth that our Ebony community members are carrying just by waking up in the skin they were given- then we ask them to go to work, pay taxes, live etc but we have not taken into account all that it takes to simply go out their front door into a world that is not welcoming to them. The hypervigilance alone is enough to keep someone's nervous system in fight or flight and that causes health concerns, social and economic hardships, strain on relationships and simply has no real need to be that way. This bill needs to pass, as we in Oregon have a history of racist legislation (when Oregon was set to be an all white state- it was not that long ago)- the gentrification of neighborhoods, the code switching that is needed to survive- we as White bodied individuals will never know all that this costs them, but we can be part of the mending. We need to heal our land and it starts with healing those that have been wounded on it. Please, let us be a state that stands up for those that have been historically marginlized, especially during this time in history where laws are being passed that further separate us by our race. Please please please, consider my loved ones when you are making this decision.