

Oregon Fujian Chamber of Commerce
7331 SW Barnes Rd, Portland, OR 97225

March 13, 2025

House Rules Committee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Letter of Support for HB 3595 to Establish Lunar New Year as a State Holiday in Oregon

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham, and members of the House Rules Committee,

I hope this letter finds you all well. On behalf of the Oregon Fujian Chamber of Commerce (OFCC), I'm writing to support for HB 3595 to designate Lunar New Year as an official state holiday in Oregon. As a vibrant and growing celebration observed by many Asian American communities across our state, recognizing Lunar New Year as a holiday would reflect Oregon's commitment to inclusivity, cultural diversity, and the contributions of its diverse population.

Lunar New Year, based on the lunar calendar, marks the beginning of a new year for numerous cultures, including Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and others. Celebrated with family gatherings, traditional performances, and symbolic activities, it is a time of renewal, gratitude, and hope. In Oregon, events such as dragon dances in Portland, lantern festivals in Sherwood, and cultural fairs in Jacksonville demonstrate the holiday's significance to thousands of Oregonians. This year marks an important step toward recognizing the Lunar New Year as a state holiday in Oregon. While neighboring states like California and Washington have already taken this step.

Establishing Lunar New Year as a state holiday in Oregon would offer several benefits. First, it would affirm Oregon's dedication to honoring the heritage of its Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities, who have enriched our state through their contributions in the arts, sciences, commerce, and civic life. Second, it would provide an opportunity for all Oregonians to learn about and engage with these traditions, fostering greater cultural understanding and unity. Third, for over 150 years, Asian communities have been an integral part of Oregon's history and development. Recognizing Lunar New Year as a state holiday would honor their contributions, promote greater cultural appreciation, and strengthen community ties across the state. Finally, aligning Oregon with states like California and Washington, would position our state as a leader in celebrating diversity.

The OFCC was established in 2019 and is an influential organization among Chinese business communities in the region. The Chamber is dedicated to uniting Fujianese people from various fields in Oregon, upholding the Fujian spirit of patriotism, and the belief that success comes through hard work. It provides an effective business communication platform to facilitate business exchanges and resource sharing. Additionally, it actively promotes cultural, economic, trade, and technological exchanges between China and the United States at the grassroots level. The OFCC celebrates Lunar New Year with its members every year, bringing the community together to enjoy traditional performances, delicious food, and cultural activities. The event serves as a valuable opportunity for members to connect, strengthen relationships, and share in the rich heritage of Fujianese culture while welcoming the new year with joy and unity.

By passing HB 3595, Oregon would make a significant step toward honoring the contributions and traditions of its diverse communities while promoting greater unity and inclusiveness. We encourage you to support this bill and recognize the importance of Lunar New Year for both current and future generations.

Sincerely,
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