

Testimony in support of SB 1516 Engrossed A

Submitted February 27, 2026

Dear Chair Bowman and members of the House Rules Committee,

I am testifying in support of SB 1516 Engrossed A because it addresses a growing public safety gap in Oregon's pretrial system. Over the past two years, Asian American households across Oregon—including in Lane County where I live—have been repeatedly targeted by organized burglary rings that specifically select victims based on race, observe individuals' daily patterns for days or weeks, and strike when families are at work. These crimes are not isolated or opportunistic, but rather they are coordinated, multi-jurisdictional, and designed to generate profit while avoiding accountability. These crimes are carried out by individuals who have strong incentives and demonstrated ability to flee the jurisdiction before trial. The individuals arrested as suspects in these crimes are repeatedly released pretrial followed by flight from the area and state. This cycle has deprived victims of any opportunity for justice and have allowed this pattern of crime to continue unchecked.

Currently courts lack clear authority to consider flight risk and danger to the community, when setting bail. As a result, defendants are released under a small bail creating conditions that do not realistically ensure their appearance in court. This repeated practice undermines accountability and public confidence in the justice system.

SB 1516A does not mandate detention or roll back due process protections; it restores judges' ability to make individualized determinations based on real-world risk. Allowing courts to consider flight risk and danger to the community in cases like these is essential to protecting vulnerable communities, restoring confidence in the justice system, encouraging reporting of crimes, and ensuring that every person can feel safe in their own home.

Please support the passage of SB 1516A.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Judith Newman

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