

Kate Brown
Governor



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Senate Committee on Education
Testimony in Support of HB 2023
May 1, 2019, 1 pm, Hearing Room B

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and Senators Gelser, Hass, and Heard:

For the record, I am Dr. Joseph Gallegos; I am a professor of social work with over forty years of experience in higher education and a former school social worker. I am a member and long-time supporter of the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs. I am here today for the Chairs of the four Advocacy Commissions representing our support for HB 2023 relating to the importance of ethnic studies to Oregon's success.

The Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs and Commission for Women all support HB 2023 that will establish, in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Education, an Inclusive Educational bill (Ethnic Studies 2.0) which is the next step in creating greater visibility of the experiences of all students in Oregon. What this bill does is to direct the SBE to add inclusive textbooks and instructional materials into existing social studies for K-12, allowing students to see themselves in the story of our state and country. HB2023 will ensure that social studies standards will include some instruction on the contributions of Native Americans; those who are of African, Asian, Pacific Island, Chicano, Latino, or Middle Eastern Descent; are Women; as well as those with Disabilities; those who are immigrants or refugees; or those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

One needs look no further than the Oregon state song, adopted in 1920, to be reminded of the state history steeped in racism and exclusion. This bill will reverse the teaching of that history and lead to a celebration of our state's diversity. Many past commissioners, and current members, have highlighted the need for public school education across the state to include ethnic and social groups with the widest cultural lens in their educational curriculum. It serves as a foundation by which to inform and grow the standards and practice of ethnic studies in school districts across the state.

The commissioners applauded the intentional action of Oregon Department of Education over the past decade to reinvest in our state's education system with programs like the Oregon Educator Equity Advisory Group and the yearly report on Oregon Educator Equity as well as sponsoring the first summit on social studies standards in many years. These are notable steps of progress that we welcome, encourage, and are in which we are participating.

HB 2023 represents the next step in making ethnic studies part of the foundation of education in Oregon with all the benefits that provides students, communities and the successful education measures Oregon needs to prosper. Thank you for your positive consideration of HB 2023.

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph Gallegos, Commissioner, OCHA

Chanpone Sinlapasai-Okamura, OCAPIA Chair

Irma Linda Castillo, OCHA Chair

Jamal Fox, OCBA Chair

Dr. Barbara Spencer, OCFW Chair

OR Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

Chanpone Sinlapasai-Okamura, Chair
David Yuen Tam, Vice Chair
Legislative members:
Senator Michael Dembrow
Representative Carla Piluso

OR Commission on Black Affairs

Jamal Fox, Chair
Lawanda Manning, Vice Chair
Legislative member:
Representative Janelle Bynum

OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs

Irma Linda Castillo, Chair
Dr. Daniel López-Cevallos, Vice Chair
Legislative members:
Senator Sara Gelser
Representative Teresa Alonso León

OR Commission for Women

Dr. Barbara Spencer, Chair
Vice Chair (vacant)
Legislative members:
Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson
Representative Sheri Schouten

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