

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission on Black Affairs

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June 5, 2020

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
Open statement to communities and policymakers statewide

As many of you are, the Oregon Commission on Black Affairs (OCBA) is deeply saddened by the reckless death of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis Police Department. And, this moment of protest is part of a much larger movement as we consider the lives lost over the past three months: Breonna Taylor, a Black woman who was killed in her own home by the Louisville (KY) Police Department. Tony McDade, a Black trans man who was killed by police in Tallahassee (FL). Nina Pop, a Black trans woman, was murdered in Missouri. Let us not forget the weaponizing of white privilege by Amy Cooper in Central Park (NY) against a Black man, Christian Cooper.

Our Black community includes LGBTQ, Trans and non-gender binary folks, our elders, people with disabilities, youth, immigrants and refugees. In recent events, all of these identities are present. For our collective Black community here in Oregon, there must be an understanding of all who are affected by the injustice that allowed the death of Mr. Floyd. We, as your OCBA

Commissioners, represent all of our community, which includes intersectional identities, personal or adjacent - and we honor them. It is important that we be clear and honest about who our community is. We embrace and hold in mind all community members in our demand for justice and equity.

We also recognize this is happening in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has taken over 100,000+ lives and has disproportionately affected Black communities. While this moment is daunting, we lift up and support the vision and platforms of the Movement for Black Lives, the (Portland based) Coalition of Communities of Color, the Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) and other organizations that are seeking legislative and policy reforms. At the same time, this is an important moment to radically reimagine our criminal justice system. The legacy of criminal justice harm for Black people in this country demands approaches that go beyond incremental changes--convenient steps that still focus on pouring resources into the institutions that have resulted in the loss of life and liberty for so many.

The time for a radical re-imagination is now. We must meaningfully pursue the divestment of resources from criminal justice and towards community resources. We must support practices that build capacity in our communities through education, health and housing justice.

ORCommissiononBlackAffairs

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Vice Chair:

Lawanda Manning

Commissioners:

Angela Addae, JD

Djimet Dogo

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Mariotta Gary-Smith

Musse Olol

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Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence

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Dr. Connie Kim-Gervey,

Research/Policy Analyst

Radical re-imagination calls for de-incarceration. We acknowledge that the confinement and supervision of our communities leaves contemporaneous and intergenerational trauma. The disparities we see in incarceration rates is unacceptable, yet it is predictable based on the inherent racism embedded into criminal justice systems and the disproportionate conviction and sentencing of Black defendants.

We call for an intentional reconciling of our nation's history and the relationship and role of our criminal justice system to the dehumanization of Black bodies.

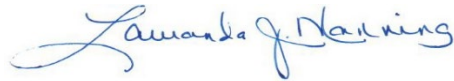
The OCBA supports any and all movements that are working towards justice. We will advocate in the short term for community-centered and driven solutions, and we will elevate discussions around radical reform to protect our communities.

In solidarity,

OCBA Commissioners:



Chair, Jamal Fox



Vice-Chair, Lawanda Manning

Commissioner Angela Addae, JD

Commissioner Ben Duncan

Commissioner Djimet Dogo

Commissioner Mariotta Gary-Smith

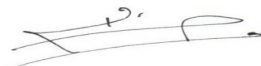
Commissioner Musse Olol

Commissioner Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence

In mutual support,



Hussein Al-Baiaty and Mohamed Alyajouri
OCAPIA Co-Chairs



Irma Linda Castillo
OCHA Chair



Robin Morris Collin
OCFW Chair

Links to resources & information:

OHEA: <https://mailchi.mp/350bb9743679/ohea-reflections-and-resources-blacklivesmatter?e=a98519540c>

Coalition for Communities of Color: <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/ccc-news/5-29-openletter>

Governor Brown: <https://www.myoregon.gov/2020/06/04/oregon-resources-racial-justice/>