



STATE SENATOR KAYSE JAMA

Senate District 24
Oregon State Legislature

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Senator Kayse Jama, 503-986-1724

Senator Kayse Jama on Taking His Oath of Office to Serve in the Oregon State Senate

SALEM – Yesterday, Senator Kayse Jama (D-East Portland) took his oath of office to serve in the Oregon State Senate after being appointed by the Multnomah and Clackamas County Boards of Commissioners.

Senator Jama will chair the Senate Committee on Housing and Development, a critical position as our state continues to navigate a public health crisis which has led to economic devastation and also as we recover from a tragic wildfire season.

“I am honored to represent Senate District 24 and serve in this vital role. We must think holistically as we address the housing crisis and the immediate needs of those who are struggling now, while also acknowledging the urgent systemic shifts needed to support those who are houseless or at risk of houselessness,” shared Senator Jama.

“It is undeniable that our marginalized communities have been affected disproportionately by the pandemic and the long-existing housing crisis. I will ensure we do not leave behind Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC), immigrants and refugees or low-income Oregonians as our state recovers. We must keep racial justice and equity a focus of housing policy and we must reckon with the racist history behind these policies. We need to think critically about what happens when the eviction moratorium ends, and we may need to address a mortgage crisis. So many are struggling, and inaction is unacceptable.”

Senator Jama is the first refugee and the first Muslim in the Oregon State Senate. He has deep ties in his community and a two decades long history of serving vulnerable and marginalized populations and advancing equity.

“In addition to addressing housing through a lens of racial justice, leaders at every level must commit to the hard work of analyzing all facets of our policy work through this lens. Oppression is woven into the roots of many of our state’s systems and it is incumbent on all of us to address these embedded inequities. That is why police accountability and criminal justice reform are top priorities for me. We need to build on the work of my colleagues in past Special Sessions and further our work on criminal justice reform.”

“It is well documented that BIPOC communities have been harmed by the “War on Drugs.” Oregonians wisely passed Ballot Measure 110 in November. Addiction touches many of our lives, especially poor and rural communities and treatment rather than punishment is the right focus. I care deeply about the smart and thorough implementation of this ballot measure, and I believe the long-term impacts of this measure will benefit all Oregonians, especially communities of color and rural Oregonians.”

“I look forward to taking my experience and perspective into the Legislature as a State Senator. I am already heartened by the warm welcome I have received from my colleagues and I am hopeful we, together, will take steps to do what’s best for our most vulnerable constituencies, and make real changes to address oppressive and racist structures. I am grateful for this opportunity and take seriously the importance of this work.”

In addition to chairing the Senate Committee on Housing and Development, Senator Jama will serve on the Senate Committee on Labor and Business, and the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation.

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