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House Democratic People of Color Caucus Issues Call for Unity, Tolerance in Coronavirus Outbreak

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon House Democratic People of Color (POC) Caucus issued the following statement on the appearance of Coronavirus in Oregon:

“With the rising awareness about the coronavirus, we call on Oregonians to unite and support one another.

We have seen a growing tide of xenophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment and racism in reaction to the virus. Fear can bring about the worst in people, but love is stronger and it will allow us to see the past the rumors and stigmas. Love and compassion will allow us to see the bigger picture and the humanity in each of us. Stigma hurts everyone by creating more fear and anger towards people instead of the disease that is causing the problem.

We must not engage in racism and xenophobia towards those who are different from us. Immigrants and people of color make up an essential part of the frontline healthcare workforce. These frontline workers will be playing a critical role in fighting the coronavirus.

We call on all Oregonians to not be led by fear and anxiety, but instead with facts. Let’s support each other and support immigrants and communities of color who are bearing the brunt of discrimination and a loss of business.

We call on public officials and bodies to provide our non-English speaking communities with the most up-to-date information through culturally appropriate and specific communications.

Counter stigma by learning and sharing facts.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following items in order to protect both yourself and your family:

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick.
- Cover your cough.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

For the most up-to-date information on the coronavirus:

- Visit the Oregon Health Authority website at:
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/DISEASES/CONDITIONS/DISEASESAZ/Pages/emerging-respiratory-infections.aspx>.
- U.S. Senator Merkley has also set up a coronavirus resource page at:
<https://www.merkley.senate.gov/coronavirus>.
- Center for Disease Control on the Coronavirus <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Members of the House Democratic POC Caucus include Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley), Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-East Portland), Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence (D-Portland), Rep. Mark Meek (D-Oregon City), Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego) and Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland).

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