



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON LEGISLATIVE BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) CAUCUS

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Oregon Legislature's BIPOC Caucus Applauds Efforts to Improve Legislative Diversity and Access

Issues call to keep up the work to build a more equitable Capitol

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon Legislature's Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Caucus issued the following statement on the announcement of proactive steps to increase diversity in the Oregon Legislature and begin to right historic wrongs:

“For the last year, we have worked together to build on the momentum of this historic moment to finally tackle generations of racial injustice and inequality in Oregon. With the help of outside organizations and the voices of countless Oregonians, we have been able to do incredible work to get resources to historically underserved communities, reform our broken criminal justice system, bring accountability to law enforcement across the state and take the first steps in building a more just and equitable Oregon for all.

“We do this work on land stolen from indigenous people under a state constitution that, at its founding, specifically banned people of color. We are regularly reminded of this history whenever we sit at our desks on the floors of the Oregon House of Representatives and Oregon Senate, where murals of white settlers and the names of mostly white men hang over our heads. And, we are reminded at the historical lack of BIPOC representation in the halls of the Oregon Capitol with the acknowledgement that this is the most diverse legislature Oregon has ever had.

“Diverse voices and perspective are critical in ensuring the work we do serves every person in this state – and on that, there is so much more work to do. It is why we applaud the bold leadership of Rep. Janelle Bynum in starting much needed conversations and advancing reforms to ensure our legislative bodies are representative of the whole state.

“[Monday's announcement from House Speaker Tina Kotek and House Majority Leader Barbara Smith Warner](#) represents meaningful reform but it is merely a beginning in the change our state demands. In the weeks and months ahead, we stand united as members of the BIPOC Caucus and as Democrats in our commitment to continue advancing bold measures and effect change that will make Oregon a better place for all.”

The members of the Legislature's BIPOC Caucus are Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley), Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-Portland), Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence (D-Portland), Rep. Mark Meek (D-Oregon City), Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego), Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland), Sen. Lew Frederick (D-Portland) and Sen. James Manning (D-Eugene) as well as Rep.-elect Wlnsvey Campos (D-Aloha), Rep.-elect Khanh Pham (D-Portland) and Rep.-elect Ricki Ruiz (D-Gresham).

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