



PRESS RELEASE

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

For Immediate Release
Sept. 25, 2020

Media Contact:
Amanda Kraus: 503-986-1074
Amanda.Kraus@OregonLegislature.gov

Aaron Fiedler: 503-986-1904
Aaron.Fiedler@OregonLegislature.gov

Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus Call on Republican Legislators and Law Enforcement to Denounce Hate and Protect Vulnerable Communities

SALEM - Ahead of anticipated far right protests in Portland, the Oregon Legislature's Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Caucus are calling on Republican legislators to denounce white supremacist and right wing extremist groups, and on law enforcement to provide support in order to protect vulnerable communities.

The BIPOC Caucus jointly issued the following statement:

“The history of hate and racist violence in Oregon is undeniable. It is seen in the gentrification of our neighborhoods and it is felt in the core of every BIPOC Oregonian who has yet to experience the promise of equal protection under the law. As white supremacist hate crimes are on the rise, we know the fear and vulnerability our communities feel when these rallies come to town to be incredibly justified.

“As our Republican colleagues have frequently condemned “rioting” in Portland, we have been disappointed by the silence of these same lawmakers in condemning the violent actions and hate perpetuated by white supremacist and right wing extremist groups. We call on our Republican colleagues to join us in bold opposition against hate, and to denounce extremist groups like the Proud Boys, Patriot Prayer, and the Three Percenters, among others.

“We know that where these white supremacist groups go, violence follows. They arrive heavily armed and [plan for violent action](#). Anything other than opposition to these groups and a recognition of the need to protect our communities functionally condones their values, hateful actions and violence.

“When these hate groups descend on our state, our collective goal should be the safety and wellbeing of our citizens. Unfortunately, we have witnessed a pattern of disparate policing across protest groups. The hands-off approach, which has been applied broadly to white supremacist groups, makes the need for extra safety precautions in BIPOC communities even more acute.

“That is why we are also calling on law enforcement jurisdictions throughout Oregon to support the Oregon State Police, the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office and Portland Police in protecting BIPOC Oregonians across the state this weekend. All law enforcement must be cognizant and responsive to the heightened fear of marginalized communities when these rallies take place in Oregon. We urge metropolitan area law enforcement to provide mutual aid this weekend – including the Washington County Sheriff’s Office, Clackamas County Sheriff’s Office, the police departments of: Gresham, Beaverton, Gladstone, Happy Valley, Tigard, Oregon City, Canby, Troutdale, Woodburn, Milwaukie, Sandy and others – to prioritize protection of our BIPOC communities.

“Protecting the lives of Oregonians should not go by the wayside due to a disagreement over policing tactics. Venues and space exist for policy and process discussions and our doors remain open. The need for law enforcement support to manage these hate groups and assist in the safety of our BIPOC communities is urgent.

“Our hope is that this weekend and beyond we can come together collectively as Oregonians to denounce hate and protect our BIPOC neighbors from violence. Together, we can build a better Oregon for everyone.”

The members of the Legislature’s Black, Indigenous and People of Color Caucus (BIPOC) 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).

###