



# PRESS RELEASE

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

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### **Oregon Legislature BIPOC Caucus Statement on Oregon Cares Fund for Black Relief and Resiliency**

SALEM – The Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Caucus issued the following statements in support of the Joint Emergency Board’s \$62 million targeted investment in the Oregon Cares Fund for Black Relief and Resiliency from the Coronavirus Relief Fund.

“The BIPOC Caucus has been vocal in our support for an equitable response to the Coronavirus pandemic. We must target resources to counteract disparate outcomes caused by existing historical disparities,” said Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland).

“We are constant and persistent advocates for continuing to act boldly to protect the health of all our marginalized communities,” said Sen. Lew Frederick (D-Portland). “Today we championed the Black community who has been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.”

“By centering the needs of the most marginalized communities among us, we will see first hand how we can provide a more holistic understanding of community health for all Oregonians,” said Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn).

“This pandemic has distilled the reality that we are only as resilient as the most vulnerable communities in our society. It is far past time to call out the needs of and provide a lifeline to Black Oregonians,” said Rep. Akasha Lawrence Spence (D-Portland).

“The Black community will utilize these resources to weather the global health pandemic and consequent recession. Our communities are made resilient when we make informed and targeted investments in those who have been historically under-resourced,” said Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley).

“Allocating money through The Oregon Cares Fund is one step toward a truly equitable future. A truly equitable response, however, also requires the State to collect disaggregated data on race and ethnicity in Oregon’s public health and economic response,” said Rep. Andrea Salinas (D-Lake Oswego).

“This investment means that a Black small business will be able to pay their employees or a community based organization will continue providing much-needed support. These investments will reap benefits for our Black communities all across our state,” said Rep. Mark Meek (D-Oregon City).

“The Oregon Cares Fund is a fundamental piece that was missing from the puzzle in our state's response to comprehensive community care during this pandemic,” said Sen. James Manning (D-Eugene). “It was incumbent on the legislature to make this investment in this community given the history of exclusion and given our moral obligation to do better.”

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