



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 3, 2022

Chief Clerk Sekerak
Oregon State Capitol

RE: Vote explanation for SB 1579 (A-Engrossed)

Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I wish to submit the following explanation for my vote on SB 1579 (A-Engrossed).

SB 1579 (A-Engrossed) directs the Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) to develop and implement an Economic Equity Investment Program to award grants to qualified organizations that provide culturally responsive services disadvantaged individuals, families, businesses, and communities.

This bill makes a one-time General Fund appropriation of \$15M to establish the Economic Equity Investment Fund, and \$15M for payments.

This program would provide grants and funding to people based on their race and ethnicity, therefore making it very likely unconstitutional. Legislative Council submitted an opinion on this bill stating that:

"Under the U.S. Supreme Court's affirmative action decisions, the Equal Protection Clause mandates that state governments treat similarly situated persons equally under the law. The Court has concluded that all race-conscious state laws are so inherently suspect that they are unconstitutional under Equal Protection analysis unless they pass strict scrutiny".

I believe that this program will be deemed unconstitutional and therefore, I voted no on the bill.

Regards,

Anna