Kate Brown
Governor

Oregon Commission on Black Affairs
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Testimony in Support of HB 2704
March 12, 2015, Hearing Room 343, 3 pm
House Committee on Judiciary

Chair Barker; Vice-chairs Olson and Williamson; and Representatives Barton, Greenlick, Krieger, Lininger, Post, and Sprenger:

The Oregon Commission for Black Affairs, in its role of advocate for communities of color in Oregon, strongly supports HB 2704.

The OCBA believes that clarity on citizen rights are important in every area and especially for both citizens and officers who are present for or engaged in a police action.

HB 2704 is such a bill. It clarifies that police officers should not expect their interactions with the public to be private. It also clarifies that the mere act of recording the public work of a police officer does not by itself constitute interference and should not draw an accusation of interference or actions such as confiscation of cameras. It leaves alone the notion that a person cannot actually interfere with the duties of a police office. The OCBA has heard testimony that cameras and other recording devices have occasionally been taken from citizens by police officers in order to stop the recording, and returned when no actual interference can be claimed. HB 2704 clears this up explicitly, and calling this out explicitly in statute is likely to make this distinction a training priority.

The Oregon Commission on Black affairs joins with our community partners and urges an Aye vote on HB 2704.

Sincerely,

James Manning, Chair

OR Commission on Black Affairs

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