



Oregon Coalition
Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

July 19, 2018

Oregon Law Commission

RE: Oregon State Capitol Workplace Harassment Work Group

Dear Mr. Shetterly and Members of the Work Group,

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence provides statewide guidance, support and training regarding sexual violence and harassment. OCADSV provides a unifying voice on behalf of 51 community based non-profit and Tribal Nation sexual and domestic violence programs throughout the state. The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence believes in the right of all persons to live their lives without fear, abuse, oppression and violence.

Accounts of sexual harassment and assault have been prevalent in the media and in our own state capitol. Many women, men, boys and girls endure this type of violence at work and in school. The fear of being ostracized, lost opportunities for advancement, jeopardizing professional references, and many more subtle as well as overt forms of retaliation has kept many victims silent. But we know that sexual harassment is preventable.

Sexual harassment tends to be an intractable problem because it is symptomatic of an array of overlapping power imbalances. This is a issue is across all employment positions at the capitol, and for employees who are from communities of color, who may be gender non-forming or whose economic resources are limited, will be targeted at greater rates. Ending exploitation and sexual harassment will require not only holding abusers accountable, but addressing the conditions that tolerate and encourage abuse.

Now is a pivotal moment to intensify our state's focus on this problem, not to shy away. The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence supports the mission that this work group has been tasked with.

Every Oregonian deserves a workplace free of harassment and violence. Our state's Capitol should be a model for this. A critical lens is needed to move forward policies and address what barriers there may be to reporting for those who experience or witness violence in the building.

Sincerely,

Vanessa R. Timmons; OCADSV Executive Director

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