STATE & REGION

House approves bill to ban hairstyle discrimination

Legislation would apply to workplaces and public schools

Associated Press

 ${\sf SALEM-A\ measure}$ passed by the Oregon House would prohibit public schools and employers from discriminating against hairstyles associated with race.

Following a 58-0 vote Wednesday, the bill now heads to the state Senate.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reports House Bill 2935 would expand existing laws against discrimination to explicitly include "physical characteristics that are historically

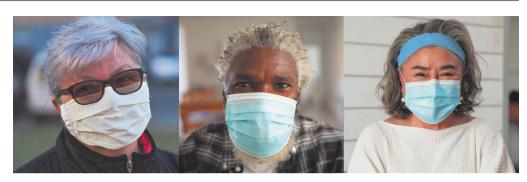
associated with race," including hairstyles such as braids, locs and twists.

The bill is part of a national campaign that emerged after a Black high school wrestler in New Jersey was forced to cut off his dreadlocks before competing in 2018. Similar situations have emerged since, including an incident in March where a volleyball player at Portland's Parkrose High School was required to cut beads from her hair in order to play.

"Oregon does not currently protect people from race-based hair discrimination even if the hairstyle is part of someone's racial identity," said state Rep. Janelle Bynum, D-Clackamas, a chief sponsor of the bill. "This means that Black people can be denied opportunities for employment or professional advancement without consequence."

Aside from expanding discrimination laws to protect hairstyles, HB 2935 also requires public school districts to include policies allowing students to wear religious clothing in competitive sports. The law, however, says districts can balance hairstyle and clothing accommodation with health and safety needs.

Versions of the bill have passed in nine states, including California and Washington, according to the coalition pushing the policy.



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Comedian will get \$35,000 settlement in border patrol stop

BY LIZZY ACKER

The Oregonian

Comedian Mohanad Elshieky was on his way back to Portland from a set at Washington State University in 2019 when he was taken off the bus by U.S. Customs and Border Protection during a stop in Spokane.

On Twitter, Elshieky wrote that agents "took my documents and interrogated me for around 20 mins then claimed my papers were fake and that I'm 'illegal."

Now, over two years later, Elshieky is one of two men who will receive a settlement after similar treatment by federal agents at the same bus station in Spokane.

Elshieky and Andres Sosa Segura — who filed separate féderal lawsuits alleging the violation of their rights — will receive \$35,000 apiece from the federal government, according to a news release

from the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project. Agents demanded Sosa Segura's "papers" during a stop in Spokane while he was on his

way home to Montana in 2017, according to the news release. For Elshieky, who moved to the U.S. from

Libya in 2014 and was granted asylum in 2018, said the incident shook his sense of safety in the government.

Elshieky now lives in New York and works on the TV show "Full Frontal with Sam Bee." In a tweet about the settlement Thursday,

Elshieky said he was glad the case is finally over.

"Maybe next time they should refrain from harassing immigrants," he said.

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