



Legislative Testimony

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

February 10, 2012

Senate Rules Committee

Senator Diane Rosenbaum, Chair
Senator Ted Ferrioli, Vice-Chair
Senator Jason Atkinson
Senator Lee Beyer
Senator Ginny Burdick

RE: Confirmation Hearing for Colette S. Peters as ODOC Director

Chair Rosenbaum, Vice-Chair Ferrioli, and members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. For the record, my name is Colette S. Peters, and I am honored to be seeking your confirmation as Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections.

As you are well aware, I have served as the Director of the Oregon Youth Authority for the past two-and-one-half years. During that time I have been privileged to work with an impressive team of agency leaders and staff who are sincerely committed to turning around the lives of Oregon's most troubled and difficult youth offenders. While I have been credited by some with leading the many innovations and accomplishments OYA has achieved during that time, I think it is important to acknowledge that those achievements were possible because of the dedication and talent of the employees at OYA.

I will miss my colleagues at the Oregon Youth Authority, and at the same time I am equally looking forward to working with the talented and impressive team that leads the Oregon Department of Corrections. I am humbled and honored to have been selected by Governor Kitzhaber to become the DOC Director, and I thank him for this recognition. If confirmed, it will be a privilege to continue serving Oregonians and the state's public safety system as the Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections.

The 4,400 employees who make up DOC are responsible for ensuring the safe incarceration and rehabilitation of 14,000 inmates, and in partnership with community corrections, more than 30,000 parolees and probationers. With 14 institutions and two county corrections agencies under our direct authority, and 34 county corrections agencies under our indirect care, DOC plays a critical role in maintaining and improving the safety of Oregonians in the communities where they live, work and play.

Throughout my career in the public safety arena, I have acted on the belief that an effective justice system holds offenders accountable for their actions, invests in rehabilitation to improve the likelihood of success once offenders leave state custody, provides re-entry supports to reduce barriers to leading a crime-free life, and prevents future victimization. Especially in these times of scarce resources, it is ever-more important for us to focus on research-based programs and services that ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and effectively. I am committed to making sure that

the investments made in Oregon's corrections system will ensure a safe environment for our staff, and achieve the greatest positive impact on our inmates, and our communities.

Just as with my most recent approach at OYA, I intend to lead DOC with the spirit of a public servant, dedicating myself to positively influencing the lives of staff members, victims, inmates, inmates' families, and the many community partners who tirelessly contribute to improving Oregon's public safety system. Every interaction we have has the possibility of changing someone's future for the better. That is a statement I made when I was confirmed as OYA's Director, and it is a statement in which I still believe today.

You have my background information provided by the Governor's Office, and you have seen first-hand the accomplishments my team and I created at OYA. With your and the full Senate's approval, I am very much looking forward to taking the helm at DOC. And now, I will answer any questions you might have.

Submitted by:

Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC)

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