

Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary

HB3280 – The Restitution Collection Pilot Program

Bob Robison, April 4, 2013

My testimony is in support of the Restitution Collection Pilot Program

Why do I care about this bill?

I retired as the Victim Services Manager for the Multnomah County parole and probation. In semi-retirement, I teach a “victimology” course at Portland State University, and volunteer with several organizations in support of crime victims.

I’ve worked with hundreds of crime victims to try and recover their restitution or compensatory fines. I’ve also worked to improve restitution collection systems in the following ways:

- Member of Attorney General Meyer’s Restitution Reform Task Force
- Organized a state-wide group of practitioners to improve our practices.
- Helped the Department of Justice chose the pilot program sites.

Why is this bill important?

Crime victims have a constitutional right to “...receive prompt restitution.” Before this project, this right was not being systematically honored in Multnomah County. This project addresses the following:

- Improves both court orders and collections.
- Provides needed help for parole/probation officers with enforcement and collection. PPOs are increasingly required to focus on high-risk violent offenders, and distracted from collecting on behalf of past victims. Lower-risk offenders are assigned to huge caseloads.
- Prevents the collection from being sent to the Department of Revenue, and resulting delays and costs to the victim.

Crime victims care about more than the money. They want justice, and a system that works to hold offenders responsible for paying the costs of the crime.

For some time the word was out among offenders that they could steal with impunity. Many knew they would never go to jail or forced to pay.

I could give countless examples of why this pilot program is needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.