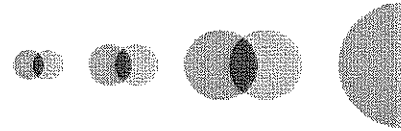




Taking action for basic human needs.



April 3, 2013

Joint Committee on Public Safety
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Prozanski, Co-Chair Winters, Co-Chair Olson, Co-Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. For the record, my name is Alison McIntosh and I am here today as the Co-Chair of the Human Services Coalition of Oregon.

The Human Services Coalition of Oregon is a coalition of approximately eighty organizations across Oregon, all concerned about the future of our state and the health and dignity of all Oregonians. We know the importance of supportive services to keep our neighbors and communities healthy. Today, we are here to support HB 3194, because we support efforts to improve and strengthen our public safety system.

Today, the State of Oregon is spending increasing amounts on prisons, while cutting funding for victims services, addiction, and mental health treatment. Too many people are turned away while seeking safety from domestic violence, too many people are turned away while trying to access treatment for addictions, and too many people with mental health conditions go untreated.

States around the country are moving to reform their corrections system because research shows there are more cost effective approaches to public safety than having a heavy reliance on incarceration. Incarceration is the most expensive public safety tool we have and we need to use it more strategically.

The Human Services Coalition of Oregon knows there are many things we can do to help create a more balanced approach to public safety. We believe that improvements to our public safety system now will help realign our priorities for the future. Those include investing in critical victims services, mental health treatment, drug and alcohol treatment, and other crime prevention strategies such as investments in community corrections. Over the long term, these investments will help to create better and stronger communities.

HB 3194, and its reforms to sentencing laws is the right approach. The smart on crime approach to this reform is a more effective and less costly way to improve public safety, hold offenders accountable, and control corrections cost. Reinvestment of savings into crime prevention strategies and victims services is a critical part of the plan to create the safe and strong communities we all want to live in.

The Human Services Coalition of Oregon is in support of HB 3194 and reinvestment in critical services. We know this approach will help create safer and healthier communities, and will help more Oregonians access the critical services they need. We thank you for your work on this important issue and for your service to our state.