



MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

February 8, 2013

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Senate Bill 69

Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am Scott Taylor, Director of the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice. I would like to submit testimony in support of SB 69.

Multnomah County Supports Expanded Use of Alcohol Monitoring Devices

Evidence indicates that low-risk nonviolent offenders can be safely supervised in the community¹. Through the appropriate use of continuous alcohol monitoring with house arrest, courts can allow less dangerous alcohol defendants safely back into the community. Nonviolent defendants can be safely supervised in the community when they are being continuously monitored for alcohol (and also confined to their homes during critical hours of the day, if needed). Continuous alcohol monitoring also helps defendants achieve sustained sobriety which is much more effective in producing short and long-term behavioral change.

On any given day, the parole and probation officers of the Department of Community Justice are actively monitoring approximately 50 offenders with alcohol monitoring devices. Our experience has shown that continuous alcohol monitoring:

- Provides counties with a cost-effective alternative to incarceration for those jail prisoners who may not pose a threat to the community;
- Provides judges and prosecutors with comprehensive, fact-based data that will enable more informed decision-making;
- Provides a vehicle to help defendants safely re-enter the community;
- Protects public safety at little to no cost to taxpayers, since most offenders pay their own supervision / monitoring fees;
- Allows offenders to hold jobs, support their families, and contribute positively to the community while abstaining from alcohol.

Submitted by:

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¹ VanNostrand, M., and G. Keebler (2009). Pretrial Risk Assessment in Federal Court. Federal Probation. Vol. 73 (2)