

TESTIMONY

TO: Joint Committee on Public Safety

RE: Support for HB 3194 Public Safety Package

I am in favor of reinvesting public safety dollars into services for victims, increased community corrections, and services such as drug treatment, mental health treatment and re-entry programs. These investments help to prevent crime, as does investment in education for at-risk youth. Oregon can hold people accountable for their behavior, while at the same time modifying some sentencing laws and making other sensible reforms proposed by the Governor's Commission on Public Safety. We shouldn't need to spend \$600 million to build more prisons.

A very good provision in HB 3194 is on the subject of youth. It is well-known that youth are not fully developed and may not have good judgment. They don't become adults by virtue of committing a serious crime. We need to recognize that young people can develop and change, and they should be reassessed after serving part of their sentence, to ascertain whether they could be supervised in the community instead of spending a long time in a prison environment. This not only would promote successful re-entry of youth into our communities, but would be cost-effective.

I want my tax money spent on things that work. In the area of public safety, I want individuals who have committed crimes to be held accountable but to also be rehabilitated, not just punished. The Governor's Commission on Public Safety did a careful study of practices that work, and I ask you to approve their recommendations as contained in HB 3194.

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