



# BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**DOUG ROBERTSON    JOSEPH LAURANCE    SUSAN MORGAN**

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February 12, 2013

Representative Carolyn Tomei, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE, Room 453  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Tomei:

I strongly support HB 2392 as amended. The bill keeps essential community programs for our youth intact.

Currently, Douglas County works in partnership with school districts to improve youth outcomes through the Build Our Kids initiative, which is based on the Search Institute 40 Developmental Assets framework. Build Our Kids was independently evaluated, engaged more than 1,000 local youth, generated more than 85,000 volunteer hours by youth and adults, and improved youth academic and social skills.

Douglas County's crime prevention strategies include supporting Options Counseling's intensive in-home family therapy, an evidence-based Multisystemic Therapy program. This program involves family and community-based treatment for youth with complex clinical, social, and educational problems. Youth are referred to services primarily by school counselors. The services are available to families for up to 6 months, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Douglas County uses both Juvenile Crime Prevention and Youth Investment funds for intensive in-home family therapy. Under the proposed state funding model, it is likely these services will no longer be available for troubled youth in our school districts.

Youth Investment funds have been instrumental in leveraging a very recently awarded \$200,000 grant from Ford Family Foundation, which allows Build Our Kids to continue implementing the 40 Developmental Assets, where youth build leadership skills, participate in service learning opportunities and experience strengthening family relationships.

I appreciate the committee's consideration of HB 2392 and encourage a yes vote.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Joe Laurance