



MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

February 12, 2013

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee

Re: Senate Bill 70

Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am Scott Taylor, Director of the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice and President of the Oregon Association of Community Corrections Directors (OACCD). I would like to submit testimony in support of SB 70.

OACCD Supports Continuing the Reduced Sentence Length for Technical Probation Revocations

This law continues the maximum number of jail days at 60 days for a technical felony probation revocation. We have operated with this reduction for several years now. We support this reduction in sanction length because there is no positive correlation between the length of a jail sanction and future criminal behavior. In fact, longer jail stays have been associated with higher rates of recidivism. It is the application of a swift and certain consequence to non-compliant behavior that is most likely to have an effect on future behavior.

These revocations are for technical violations, which means there is not a new criminal conviction but instead failure to follow the conditions of supervision. The most common violations are for failure to report as directed, moving without notifying your PO, positive Urinalysis tests. These violations while concerning and part of a behavior pattern that may lead to further sanctions, do not improve with longer sentences. A quick glance would indicate that recently 50% of Multnomah Revocations were for a technical violation. It is a swift certain response that affects the compliance and behavior change we seek. After serving the 60 days, in most cases they are placed on supervision again, and therefore we seek the most effective ways to impact their behavior.

This bill is good public safety policy but also serves as an example of how disincentives to Community Corrections take form. Several years ago during very tight budget discussions, Community Corrections in partnership with the Department of Corrections offered this reduction in revocation time as both an evidence-based practice but also in an effort to provide budget relief to the legislature. The result for many counties was a loss of revenue that forced the closures of effective programs that were working in coordination with local jails. Our local management of the Local Control population, a population that used to come to prison, has been reduced from an initial 1,600+ a day to 617 today. That means that we are saving the state over 1,000 beds daily or \$64 million every 2 years. Yet, there are no financial incentives built into our current system to encourage continued or further reductions of this population.

So while we support SB 70 in its design and implementation as an evidence- based practice, it is important to understand how the consistent reduction of community corrections funding begins to contribute to the local hydraulics of managing this population.

Submitted by:

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