



Department of Community Justice
MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON
Juvenile Services Division

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May 15, 2013

TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Christina McMahan, Juvenile Services Division Director

RE: Support for HB 3183 as Amended

Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) urges your support of HB 3183 with its current amendments. This bill would permit collaboration between key public safety stakeholders to encourage the successful transition of 16 and 17 year old youth from local facilities who have been convicted of Measure 11 or waived on other adult charges, by allowing these youth to be taken directly to a youth correction facility for intake purposes, rather than first going to Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, an institution for adult offenders.

Why is this bill needed?

Multnomah County has made the policy choice to lodge juveniles who have been charged with Measure 11 offenses in the Donald E. Long Juvenile Detention Center. Our county has made this choice so that youth who are awaiting resolution of their adult cases can receive age-appropriate services in an environment consisting of juvenile justice professionals who are trained to deal with adolescent development and behavioral issues. As a state, Oregon has also made the policy choice to incarcerate these same juveniles in youth correction facilities, rather than adult prisons, until they complete their sentences or reach the age of 25. Under current law, it is mandated that 15 year-olds who are convicted as adults are taken directly to a youth correction facility for intake purposes.

Given the policy choices that have been made at the state and local level, it is incongruent to transition youth from a local juvenile detention facility, then to an adult prison facility for intake, and then finally to a youth correction facility. While House Bill 3183 is permissive rather than mandatory in terms of intake procedures for older juveniles, this bill would provide an opportunity for collaboration between the Department of Corrections, Oregon Youth Authority, and local public safety agencies. While the length of time a youth is undergoing the intake process at Coffee Creek has been greatly reduced, the reality is that these youth spend the majority of their time at that facility alone, they are in an environment where they have some level of exposure to adult offenders, and they are being supervised and monitored by adult correctional professionals. These conditions are known contradictions to best practices for juveniles.

House Bill 3183 provides an opportunity for agreements to be reached that could lead to protocols which reflect greater consistency with policy choices our State and community has already made. This could in turn enhance the successful transition of youth who are serving adult sentences in youth correction facilities. I urge your support of HB 3183-2.