

**Testimony in support of HB 3327
Submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee
by Shannon Wight, Associate Director for the Partnership for Safety and Justice
May 28, 2013**

Chair Prozanski, Members of the Committee, for the record my name is Shannon Wight and I am testifying today in support of HB 3327 on behalf of the Partnership for Safety and Justice.

Partnership of Safety and Justice is a non-profit, statewide membership organization that has worked in Oregon for 14 years. We are a unique organization in that we advocate for policies that benefit both people convicted of crime and victims of crime. We believe we can and should have a public safety system that ensures the people most impacted by crime and violence have opportunities to rebuild their lives.

We are here today in support of HB 3327 because we know that, particularly for youth convicted in the adult criminal justice system, an adult felony conviction on their record can make finding meaningful employment and stable housing nearly impossible. None of us are better off when youth who have been held accountable for their crimes are saddled with barriers to success.

Youth who commit crimes must be held accountable for their crimes. They should also receive programming and treatment that make them less likely to commit future crimes. This is paramount; both for the success of the youth and to ensure that there are no future victims. Youth who commit sexual offenses and receive treatment have very high success rates and are unlikely to commit future crimes.

We support HB 3327 informed by research that demonstrates that only 4% to 14% of youth convicted of sexual offenses will commit another sexual offense. This is consistent with a February 2011 report by Research and Evaluation in the Oregon Youth Authority, "*OYA Recidivism Risk Assessment – Violent Crime.*" That report found fewer than 8% of youth recidivate in this category of offenses. These findings, both locally and nationally, are in stark contrast to previously held beliefs about the propensity of people convicted of sex offenses to commit future crimes. This new knowledge should guide our policies.

We support HB 3327 for youth who have complied with the terms of their sentence and who have already overcome the substantial hurdle of getting relief from sex offender registration – to have their conviction expunged.

We commend Representatives Harker and Kotek for addressing this issue as brought to them by constituents. We urge your support of HB 3327.