

Testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Public Safety

HB5018 – The Budget of the Oregon Department of Justice

Bob Robison, February 27, 2013

This written testimony is in support of the Crime Victims Services Division (CVSD) Budget Request.

Our criminal justice system is out of balance. We spend too much on prisons, and not enough on behalf of crime victims.

I am the retired Victims Services Manager for Multnomah County Community Justice (parole/probation). In semi-retirement I teach Portland State University students how to work with crime victims. I volunteer with several victim services agencies, including the Portland Women's Crisis Line.

As an advocate, I've represented hundreds of crime victims.

I urge you to support Attorney General Rosenblum's budget to increase support for crime victims in the following areas:

- Child Abuser Multidisciplinary Response Teams – approximately \$2M to make up for cuts that began in 2007.
- Victim Assistance Programs in local prosecutor's offices -- \$2M to assure all victims who report crimes have the support they deserve.
- The Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (ODSVS) -- \$3M to move us closer to meeting minimum emergency services. There is ample justification to increase the ODSVS to at least \$4M. In Portland, I must regularly tell battered women that there are no shelter beds available – and to do the best they can to stay safe with an abuser for just a while longer, or become homeless. The lack of services is truly tragic.

I also ask you to please continue the Restitution Pilot Program, also in the CVSD budget. Funding this project for a while longer will help us establish a collection system that will eventually be self-sustaining.

These improvements are part of other first steps this Legislature will hopefully take to balance our justice system for needs and rights of crime victims, the rehabilitation of offenders, and the protection of our communities. Reinvesting in support for crime victims is consistent with the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Public Safety

Thank you for your consideration.