



# MARION COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

JASON MYERS, SHERIFF

February 27, 2013

Representative Jeff Barker, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Barker and Committee Members:

For the record, my name is Jeff Wood and I serve as the Parole & Probation Division Commander with the Marion County Sheriff's Office and Chair of the Marion County Reentry Council. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2450, as well as reiterate the special thanks by Marion County Commissioner Sam Brentano to Representative Kevin Cameron for introducing this bill on behalf of the Marion County Reentry Initiative.

The Marion County Reentry Initiative, or MCRI, has achieved significant successes with the more than 600 individuals who return to Marion County from state prison each year. In addition to developing evidence-based employment, housing, and cognitive treatment which have achieved a significant reduction in our recidivism rate, our MCRI team has begun to address several policy issues aimed at reducing the barriers to serving this population.

House Bill 2450 was developed to address a need identified by our local partners. When individuals with serious physical or mental health conditions are released from prison, they often have difficulty getting medical or mental health care. The vast majority of clients are single men who are often not covered by the Oregon Health Plan or private insurance. As a member of the Sheriff's Office division responsible for the management of offenders released from incarceration, the simple barrier of basic health services can cause serious impediments to successful reentry, as well as increase the risk to public safety.

The Salem Free Clinics are operated by a faith-based organization in Salem. The clinics rely heavily on volunteer or retired (or both) practitioners who donate their services to serve people with significant needs and limited incomes. Director Todd Gould spoke passionately to us about the struggles encountered by clinic staff as they reach out to recruit volunteers. The most immediate barrier to the practitioner is regaining a license, particularly if more than a year has passed since the person has practiced medicine. A second barrier is concerns about tort liability and the cost of insurance.

In response to this research, we proposed House Bill 2450 that does the following:

1. Adds "individuals who are under the supervision of a corrections officer" to the client population defined in House Bill 4027 (2012). As an amendment, we are asking that line 15-16 be modified from "Corrections Officer" to "Parole and Probation Officer". This will also need to be modified on line 30 on page 1, as well as line 1 and 7 on page 2. As you are aware, House Bill 4027 allows persons providing outreach services to homeless individuals immunity from civil liability. We believe that by adding reentry clients to the 4027 definition, it would better encompass services provided in volunteer clinics to reentry clients, such as services provided at Salem Free Clinics.

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*"To whom much is entrusted, much is expected."*

2. Requires relevant regulatory boards to make available information to the state Department of Corrections and to the county community corrections programs about programs that already exist for retired practitioners to become re-licensed so these practitioners can volunteer their services. We found that there are a number of viable options and believe that increased and improved communication and education could provide a path for practitioners who would like to become volunteers in clinics serving people with limited financial resources.

We appreciate the committee's consideration of House Bill 2450. We have included the attached brochure with information about the Marion County Reentry Initiative and our track record in serving this population.

Sincerely,



Commander Jeff Wood  
Marion County Sheriff's Office  
Parole & Probation Division