



**Testimony of Becky Straus, Legislative Director
In Support of HB 2549
House Judiciary Committee
February 28, 2013**

Chair Barker and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of HB 2549, which would move Oregon's system of sex offender notification and registration to a three-tiered classification based on risk. This is a smart proposal that takes a reasoned view on public safety. We participated in the interim workgroup to develop the proposal and thank Representative Krieger, Representative Olson, Committee Counsel Bill Taylor, and all members of the workgroup for their time, work, and thoughtful discussion. We support this bill.

Use of Risk Assessment Benefits Public Safety and Public Safety Budgets

Identification of those individuals that are classified as moderate to high risk would ensure an accurate reflection of those that pose the greatest threat to public safety. Similarly, because the consequences of notification can be so severe, risk assessment also helps to avoid disrupting the stability of low risk offenders in ways that may actually increase their risk.¹

Risk assessment allows for appropriate allocation of resources ensuring those of the greatest risk receive the most intensive supervision (including incarceration and registration if necessary), as well as appropriate treatment options. Contrary to popular belief, all persons who have committed sexual offenses do not pose the same risk to the community, thus an assessment ensures that finite resources are not wasted on low-risk individuals. We know that treatment is vital to the prevention of future sexual offending. A comprehensive risk assessment provides the information to determine the level of intervention necessary for success and response to treatment. Determining appropriate treatment is critical in decreasing recidivism.

Again, we appreciate the work of all the stakeholders on this bill and thank the committee for your consideration of this important issue.

Please feel free to be in touch at any time with questions or comments.

¹ Association for Treatment of Sexual Abusers, <http://www.atsa.com/registration-and-community-notification-adult-sexual-offenders>