

## **OREGON STATE SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2685**

Before the House Judiciary Committee, March 5, 2013

By: OSSA President Jason Myers, Marion County Sheriff



Chair Barker and Committee Members:

For the record, my name is Jason Myers and I am the Sheriff of Marion County. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 2685. As you are all aware, HB 2685 authorizes the Department of Corrections to contract with political subdivisions within the state and allow for the temporary release of inmates under the same terms as outlines confined by the Department. To give you some context outlining the necessity of this bill, during the 2011 session, the legislature allocated one million dollars through a budget note to for a reentry services pilot project. Consistent with that budget note, the Department solicited interested counties who were willing to provide evidence-based treatment, employment preparation including work release and transitional planning for inmates who were scheduled to release to that county or counties. Although there was a series of significant delays, ultimately Marion, Jackson, Washington and Lane Counties were selected for funding. While the IGA's were in the various states of implementation, DOC reported, in consultation with the Oregon Department of Justice, that they did not have the statutory authority to enter into some of the agreements, hence the need for this bill, which gives the statutory authority to DOC and allows them to enter into agreements with counties to provide reentry services as specified by the reentry legislative budget note. It should be noted this bill does not mandate counties to enter into agreements, only allow for an agreement to be made if a county or counties are interested.

Locally in Marion County, more than 600 individuals return to our community from state prison each year and have achieved significant success in terms of a declining recidivism rate. In addition to developing evidence-based employment, housing, and cognitive treatment programs with the goal of reduced recidivism, my team has begun to tackle a number of policy issues that have created barriers to serving this population. As a county which leads the state in transitional planning and Reach-Ins to DOC institutions, I believe this bill will act in furtherance of these goals, giving my staff a needed tool to continue to address transition and the reformative process within our community.

I appreciate the committee's consideration of House Bill 2685 and am available for any questions if needed.

Thank you.

**Oregon State Sheriffs' Association**

PO Box 7468 Salem OR 97303 (503) 364-4204 info@oregonsheriffs.org www.oregonsheriffs.org