



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**PUBLIC SERVICES BUILDING**  
2051 KAEN ROAD | OREGON CITY, OR 97045

February 10, 2014

RE: Opposition to HB 4134, Relating to High-Risk Youth

Dear Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee:

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners wishes to express its concerns regarding HB 4134, which proposes changes to the allocation of Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) funds. We appreciate the work of the Youth Development Council (YDC), but must strongly oppose any effort that has the potential to dismantle the county's vital and successful juvenile justice prevention programs.

Under HB 4134, established county programs will have to be discontinued as of July 1, 2014 as the new "Youth and Community Grant" process takes over. The roughly \$3 million remaining in statewide JCP funds (\$6 million per biennium) will be diverted to the new competitive bid process. This is a significant departure from past practice. JCP funds are critical to the continued success of juvenile department prevention programs, which face significant destabilization should HB 4134 be implemented.

In Clackamas County, our Juvenile Department serves as an integral player in the continuum of public safety by providing cognitive behavioral skills and diversion services to our local youth. Clackamas County has developed a strong network of collaboration with schools, non-profits, and communities to collectively increase public safety and the prevention of juvenile crime. The roughly \$216,000 in Juvenile Crime Prevention funding that our Juvenile Department receives annually has helped to leverage additional dollars to enhance and increase prevention services for at-risk youth. Specifically, these funds have yielded the following outcomes:

- Sixteen schools currently offer skills classes to at-risk youth, providing prevention services to over 360 youth who are not in the juvenile justice system;
- Last year 365 youth receiving diversion services in Clackamas County did not recidivate, representing approximately 89% of recipients;
- Approximately 960 youth have successfully completed skills classes in the last six years; and
- 81% of youth referred to the Juvenile Department do not reoffend.

The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners urges you to oppose HB 4134 in its current form, as well as any statutory change to the existing JCP population-based funding formula outlined in ORS 417.855(3). County Juvenile Departments have demonstrated their ability to understand local priorities for youth and develop strong community collaborations implementing effective prevention services for youth and families. Local juvenile programs have a proven track record of transforming high-risk youth into productive citizens and keeping at-risk youth from entering the juvenile justice system.

Sincerely,

John Ludlow, Chair  
On Behalf of the Clackamas County Board of Commissioners