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February 3, 2015

Representative Peter Buckley  
900 Court St NE, H-272  
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Richard Devlin  
900 Court St NE, S-211  
Salem, OR, 97301

Dear Representative Buckley and Senator Devlin:

As you continue your work on the 2015-2017 biennial budget we want to recognize the many difficult decisions you'll have to make and thank you for the work you're doing.

We're writing today to express our concern regarding the proposed reduction in funding for the Justice Reinvestment Program that's reflected in your recently published budget framework. As you know, the Governor's Recommended Budget allotted over \$58M for Justice Reinvestment. That's approximately *half* of the total state savings realized as a result of HB-3194 programs that suppress prison population growth, reduce operational costs, and delay construction of new prisons.

Upon seeing your proposed reduction in print, we felt compelled to immediately express our concern about the state's proposed failure to honor its financial commitment to counties.

As you know, HB 3194 was not an idea hatched and passed in one session. The roots of 3194 extend back to 1995 and SB 1145, a bill designed to shift corrections work from the state to local authorities, while providing the funding necessary to improve efficiency, optimize outcomes for offenders and community safety, and reduce overall cost. HB 3194 was the next logical step in decentralizing offender management. It also coincided with a national reexamination of corrections systems from both fiscal and policy perspectives. The principle underlying 3194 was simple: commit state resources previously earmarked for prison construction and operation to law enforcement services and community-based public safety infrastructure and programs. The bill was designed to save money and improve outcomes by focusing resources on viable, progressive alternatives to prison, administered at the county level, with attendant top-tier research and validation to ensure that our resource allocation decisions continue to improve over time. It was a courageous and prudent step in the direction of public safety reform.

Lane County leadership participated in the crafting of 3194. We also collected and analyzed data and participated in the rulemaking to implement legislative objectives and ensure program success. This work was done with confidence that the state would honor its promise to fully allocate projected DOC savings to local justice reinvestment, so the supporting programs could

be created and maintained. Lane County also relied upon the state's commitment when we drafted our ten year Public Safety Plan, as concurrent tracking made it clear that projected the savings would materialize as expected.

The state is already receiving the financial benefit of the HB-3194 bargain today: inmate populations are stabilizing or dropping, operational costs are declining proportionately, and the imminent need for new prison construction has been eliminated. If the legislature fails to allocate resulting savings as promised, Lane County and others will be unable to create or maintain the systems and programming that are producing the savings. Oregon's prison population growth will return to its former trajectory, with a prompt loss of short-term operational savings, expedited construction timelines for new prisons, and the inevitable compounding impact of cost-rollups on both. Honoring the promises made during the negotiation of HB-3194 isn't just the right thing to do; it's the least expensive path -- and a significant step toward the progressive prison reform the legislature has espoused for more than a decade.

HB-3194 was made possible by an uncommon convergence of research support, state and county financial necessity, and a small group of leaders who learned to trust each other in spite of compelling divisive influences. If you de-fund justice reinvestment as you've proposed, we'll forfeit that trust and lose the opportunity to prove the public safety value of early intervention, remediation and other prison alternatives. Please give the Justice Reinvestment Program a chance by funding it at the level provided in the Governor's Recommend Budget.

Sincerely,



Jay Bozievich, Chair  
Lane County Commissioner, West Lane



Thomas M. Turner, Sheriff  
Lane County Sheriff



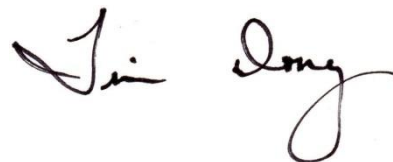
Alex Gardner  
Lane County District Attorney



Pete M. Kerns  
City of Eugene, Chief of Police



Tim Laue  
Chair, Public Safety Coordinating Council



Tim Doney  
City of Springfield, Chief of Police