



To: House Committee Human Services and Housing
From: Representative Jodi Hack
Date: February 18, 2015

HB 2031-Oregon Youth Authority Juvenile In-Home Pilot Program

February 18, 2015

Good afternoon,

Chair Keny-Guyer, members of the Committee: for the record my name is Jodi Hack and I am the Representative for House District 19 which includes South Salem, Turner, and Aumsville. Thank you all for hearing House Bill 2031 today.

Members of the Committee, allow me to get straight to the point: right now youth in the Oregon juvenile justice system face a very serious risk. They face the risk of continuing down the path they have started early in their lives: a path of unlawful behavior, social and family instability, and most likely conviction for their actions unless we do something to end the cycle of dysfunction and assist them in their rehabilitation. It is our duty as elected officials and as Oregonians to do everything in our power to ensure that these at-risk youth are not forgotten or written off as criminals, but instead are put into programs where they are surrounded by people who love them and have their best interests at heart. HB 2031 will establish a program that does exactly that.

Members of the Committee, I am here today on behalf of HB 2031 which will create a juvenile justice pilot project that brings intensive in-home services to the at risk youth of Marion and Multnomah Counties and their families. The competent members of the Oregon Youth Authority, whom you have just heard from, will be handling the provider contract and conduct an evaluation on the success of this pilot program and will determine whether or not to replicate it statewide. This bill will specifically target youth offenders who have entered the juvenile justice system early, those struggling with mental illness, and those who have three or more criminal referrals within a twelve month period (these offenses are minor in nature and are reflective of Measure 11 crimes). These at-risk youth will be placed into a holistic, evidence based and intensive in-home service that will be specifically tailored to meet the needs of the youth individually as well as equipping the family with the tools they need and involving them in the process every step of the way. The way the system works now; youth are sent across our state to receive treatment and are taken out of the home – diminishing the strength of the family unit. I am passionate about this bill because it will serve to strengthen the family institution and we all know the importance of keeping families together especially when dealing with juveniles.

Chair Keny-Guyer, members of the Committee: I implore you to support this bill with the -1 amendments, keeping in mind the deep and positive impact it will have on youth and families involved.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.