



Marion County

OREGON

February 18, 2015

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Testimony provided by Faye Fagel, Juvenile Director, Marion County
Support HB 2031

Chair Alissa Keny-Guyer, members of the House Committee on Human Services and Housing. My name is Faye Fagel and I am the Director of Marion County Juvenile Department. I am providing testimony in support of HB 2031.

HB 2031 would establish a Marion and Multnomah County pilot to provide intensive in-home services intervention for youth referred to the juvenile departments. This is a missing component in the continuum of juvenile justice services to cost effectively hold youth accountable and provide opportunities for skill building and reformation to reduce public safety risks.

Currently, Marion County has roughly sixty youth in residential placements throughout the state. The system of residential placements is a valued service delivery model. Within this model youth are placed in programs throughout the state through contracts with the Oregon Youth Authority.

The pilot would serve a subset of youth who would typically be referred for these residential placements. Likewise there are youth still within the community with similar dynamics who potentially would benefit from the pilot services. These youth access that level of state service due to the youth's chronic and persistent delinquent behavior and the families' complex needs and challenges. The family challenges inhibit the ability to provide appropriate and consistent parental supervision and limit setting. Criminal behavior is often not the first or primary issue for most of these youth nor is it the first sign of trouble for the families. Indicators of need are apparent before the age of 13 with disruptions in education from truancy, suspensions or expulsions and academic failure, family conflicts, ineffective communication, substance abuse, mental health, unresolved trauma, or through family disruptions such as divorce, relocations and connections with new partners and siblings.

Interventions with these youth within the context of their family systems and community can be more effective than sending them out of the community to a residential placement and then trying to develop some feasible after care plan. In the absence of substantial changes within the family dynamics, returning the changed youth to a static environment undoes the youth's success potential. In addition most of these youth have siblings and the interventions within the family system will likely produce positive outcomes for all youth within the family and prevent their entrance into the juvenile justice system.

HB 2031 would create the interventions for a select group of youth and their families within the local community working with the natural supports of the school, non-profits, substance abuse treatment, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc. This intensive accountability through the provider and juvenile department partnership provides for substantial positive changes for the youth, stabilizing their home environment and achieving long term risk reduction and cost effective public safety outcomes.