

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 5542  
Oregon Youth Authority budget and bond funding  
10-Year Strategic Facilities Plan**

**Submitted to the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety  
By Andrew Ko, Executive Director, Partnership for Safety and Justice  
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To: The Honorable Chip Shields, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Jennifer Williamson, Co-Chair and  
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

Partnership of Safety and Justice (PSJ) is a statewide, non-profit organization that has worked to reform public safety and criminal justice policy in Oregon for more than 15 years. We advocate for public safety and criminal justice policies that address the needs of all people affected by crime and society's response to crime. We believe that effective policy should include an appropriate level of accountability from those who commit crimes, resources to ensure that crime survivors get the services they need, and a commitment to proven strategies that prevent crime and provide opportunities for both victims and people who commit crimes to rebuild their lives.

Partnership for Safety and Justice supports passage of SB 5542, Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) budget and bond funding for OYA's 10-Year Strategic Facilities Plan. OYA plays a central role in protecting Oregonians, both by ensuring that young people who have committed criminal acts are held accountable and (b) by providing a safe environment for those same youth to receive evidenced-based treatment, education and social programs.

During the 2013-14 biennium, the Legislature funded OYA to launch its Youth Reformation System, a predictive analysis model that OYA uses to inform its decision making at all levels of Oregon's juvenile justice system. The model uses data stored within the Juvenile Justice Information System to ensure better social, health and economic outcomes for these youth, all of whom will eventually leave OYA custody, and for the general public by reducing the risk that these young people will commit future crimes. Fully funded, this investment has the potential to reduce taxpayer expense through crime prevention and future justice system costs.

We also support continued funding of OYA's comprehensive culture change initiative: Positive Human Development (PHD). By setting high expectations and clear accountability through the PHD approach, OYA seeks to establish secure, caring and supportive relationships with youth under its supervision. Maintaining funding levels for OYA will help the agency to continue these transformational efforts and to promote greater public safety when these young people are released from OYA custody.

Finally, pursuant to legislative direction during the 2014 session, OYA finalized a 10-year strategic plan to consolidate and update its facilities. These are places where OYA serves Oregon's most at risk youth and, based on the input of our supporters with loved ones in OYA custody and our direct observations, changes to OYA's facilities are overdue and desperately needed to bring Oregon's system into line with nationally recognized standards and to facilitate best practices that will deliver positive outcomes for individual youth and the general public.

Partnership for Safety and Justice urges you support OYA's continued progress by maintaining the OYA capacity to better serve the young people under its supervision. We ask that you support SB 5542.