



March 19, 2015

To: Joint Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways and Means

From: Paul Solomon, Executive Director, Sponsors, Inc.

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My name is Paul Solomon and I am the Executive Director at Sponsors, Inc. in Eugene, OR. I also serve on the Governor's Reentry Council and am the vice-chair of Lane County's Local Public Safety Coordinating Council. I am here today to talk about the need to embrace evidence based programs that are proven to reduce recidivism for people in custody and the community. Given our limited funding for institutional and community based programming, it is critical that we use our treatment dollars wisely.

For the past 41 years Sponsors has been providing Reentry Services in Lane County. We currently operate 12 buildings on 6 sites with 145 beds of transitional housing for people releasing from prison and jail and are currently in development with Lane County's Housing Authority to build a new 60 unit apartment complex for people with criminal histories.

We have been able to develop a range of programs based on years of experience and research. We provide a variety of on-site programs built around our transitional housing for men and women, including: a Mentoring Program; Cognitive Behavioral Therapy; a "One Stop" Reentry Resource Center for people with criminal histories that employs 25-50 people a month; a Veteran's Program; an Education Program; Drug and Alcohol treatment (through a contracted provider); services for sex offenders; a Legal clinic and most recently a new facility for women and children that uses the Parenting Inside-Out curriculum and provides services for the children. This amazing new building allows women to regain custody of their kids, in a structured environment with programs designed to break the intergenerational cycle of crime.

Despite our growth, our programs have been over-subscribed. At this time, beds in our housing program are regularly booked 6-8 months prior to release. Given the situation, it has become very important that we serve the right people. In recent years, we have embraced the use of validated risk assessment tools to determine who gets access to our programs and what type of services they receive. For this reason, we employ the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) model. The principles of RNR have been extensively researched and are widely accepted in corrections. Using validated risk assessment tools, in our case, the LS/CMI, we are able to focus on the highest risk individuals. Practically speaking, we prioritize our

(Over)

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resources to the highest risk. Part of the reason for doing this is to categorically exclude low-risk individuals from participating in an environment with higher risk people where they may experience a contamination effect and actually do worse. Additionally, we know that we get the greatest return on investment when we focus on high-risk individuals. The need principle allows us to assess criminogenic needs and target them in treatment. Finally, the responsivity principle allows us to maximize an individual's ability to benefit from our interventions by tailoring the treatment to the learning style, motivation and abilities of each person.

As a non-profit that receives Community Corrections Grant and Aid funding as well as HB 3194 Justice Reinvestment funding, we are required to provide "evidence based" services that are "cost effective" and can be measured. *With limited public funding for corrections programs, we need to insure that our dollars are serving the maximum number of people, to the greatest effect.*

We know that the vast majority of people in custody will return to our communities. I appreciate your thoughtful approach and sincerely hope that you will adequately fund DOC's effort to provide efficacious and cost-effective treatment strategies to those who have the greatest need and will return to our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Solomon". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Paul Solomon
Executive Director