



# POLK COUNTY

POLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE \* DALLAS, OREGON 97338-3177  
CRIMINAL DIVISION \* (503) 623-9268  
SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT \* (503) 623-9269  
VICTIM ASSISTANCE \* (503) 623-9268  
FAX \* (503) 623-7556

## DISTRICT ATTORNEY

AARON FELTON  
District Attorney  
[felton.aaron@co.polk.or.us](mailto:felton.aaron@co.polk.or.us)

March 26, 2015

Robert W. Hermann  
Washington County District Attorney  
Oregon District Attorneys Association  
610 Hawthorne Ave. SE, Ste 210  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 3194 and Justice Reinvestment Funding

Dear Bob:

I appreciate the opportunity to share with members of the Legislature the role the Polk County District Attorney's Office is playing within the public safety system to ensure that the anticipated avoided costs from the sentencing reforms enacted in 2013's HB 3194 are being achieved.

Similar to other District Attorneys, this office did not seek nor did we receive Justice Reinvestment Fund dollars for our office. Instead, we supported the funds being directed towards Polk County's Community Corrections Department for proven programs which promote rehabilitation of offenders and reduce recidivism.

JRF funds support Polk County's thriving Drug Court which is presided over by Judge Sally Avera and staffed by the Community Corrections Director, a prosecutor from this office, as well as other significant community partners. JRF funds also support the Community Corrections Department's Transitional Housing program. Stable housing for individuals on supervision is a proven component of an effective plan to reduce recidivism in the community.

As the NW/Coastal RIC report shows there have been reductions in several categories studies in Polk County. There have also been increases. I hesitate to draw conclusions based on one year of data. Certainly these programs have meaningful impacts. However, it also cannot be ignored that the Polk County public safety system is going through an unprecedented period of financial distress. I have only three full time criminal deputies to serve a county of 76,000 residents. Our Sheriff's office no longer patrols a 24 hour cycle due to the high number of lay-offs. As a result our overall intakes and prosecutions are down, which impacts the numbers presented in the RIC report.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the impacts of the JRF in Polk County.

Very truly yours,

Aaron Felton  
District Attorney

cc: Doug Harclerod