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February 9, 2016

Senate Judiciary Committee  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 1550

Dear Chairman Prozanski:

This letter is to explain how Idaho's prosecutors use the Grand Jury. Idaho's prosecutors do not rely nearly exclusively on the Grand Jury to charge defendants as do District Attorneys in Oregon. In Idaho, while prosecutors have the option of using the Grand Jury, most use the preliminary hearing as their exclusive method of charging. In fact, only a handful of Idaho's counties even have standing Grand Juries.

In those few Idaho counties which have Grand Juries, they are often reserved for cases involving vulnerable crime victims, such as child sexual abuse and domestic violence victims.

While Idaho requires that Grand Jury proceedings be recorded, either by digital means, or by a court reporter, it must be remembered that Idaho prosecutors take only a tiny fraction of their cases to the Grand Jury. For instance, in my county (the sixth largest and one of only five with a standing Grand Jury) only 15 of the 700 felony cases we prosecute each year are handled by the Grand Jury.

Recording, transcribing, and answering inevitable defense challenges in such a tiny number of cases is not a huge burden in Idaho's hybrid Grand jury/Preliminary Hearing system. It would, of course, be overwhelming if we had a system like Oregon's which uses the Grand Jury almost exclusively.

Sincerely,

Grant P. Loeb  
Twin Falls County Prosecuting Attorney