



OREGON

February 20, 2017

Joint Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee  
Co-Chair Jackie Winters, Co-Chair Duane Stark, and Committee Members  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chair Winters and Co-Chair Stark  
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee:

I am writing to you as the Oregon State Director of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, a nonprofit network of over 130 law enforcement leaders in Oregon and over 5,000 nationwide. Our members include police chiefs, sheriffs, and prosecutors who interact with Oregon's youth and those most at-risk every day. Law enforcement leaders want to prevent juvenile crime, but for those who do commit a crime, they want to avoid recidivism and halt the cycle of multi-generational crime. This is why **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids supports SB 5042, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) budget and bond funding for the continuation of OYA's 10-Year Strategic Facilities Plan.**

In 2013, there were more than 1,000 youth residing in juvenile detention, correctional and/or residential facilities across the state of Oregon. The average annual cost of juvenile custody is \$88,000, which is even more expensive than the \$61,000 annual price tag for a Harvard University education. We all share the common objective of saving taxpayer dollars and reducing the number of youth in state facilities, including reducing the number of repeat offenders to save money in the years to come.

OYA facilities use a number of evidence-based treatment curricula in order to best meet the needs of each juvenile offender. One of these treatment programs is Aggression Replacement Training (ART), low-cost, short-term coaching for those youth that exhibit aggressive or disruptive behavior. The coaching includes interpersonal, anger management, and social problem-solving skills that can be used to avoid aggression in many situations. A Washington state study found that, when delivered correctly, ART cut felony convictions within 18 months by 24 percent. This treatment gets to the root of recidivism, which our law enforcement leaders and officers deal with every day, and the reduction of recidivism rates leads to greater cost-savings further on.

The members of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids work hard to get kids on the right track early to prevent them from ever becoming involved in the juvenile justice system. However, when some youth do encounter the system, we need to ensure that the right services are made available to the right youth and that their first encounter with the juvenile justice system is their last.

I urge you to support SB 5042 and OYA's budget to increase public safety and help juveniles who encounter the justice system get back on track with evidence-based treatments to avoid a future life of crime.

Sincerely,

Martha Brooks  
State Director  
Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Oregon

C: Governor Kate Brown  
Senator Richard Devlin

OYA Director Fariborz Pakseresht  
Representative Nancy Nathanson