

February 16, 2017

The Honorable Jackie Winters, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Duane Stark, Co-Chair  
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs and members of the Committee:

This letter is in support of SB 5042, the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) budget and bond funding for the continuation of OYA's 10-Year Strategic Facilities Plan. OYA protects the public by holding youth accountable and providing a safe environment for evidenced-based treatment services, education and reformation.

I would like to start with a question and I want you to take it in real hard. What is it that you want to gain? A new prison or a functional program with the abilities to create a safe community?

I'm a youth at MacLaren Correctional Facility that got incarcerated without hope or help. But OYA started contracting with Janus Youth Programs to sustain Hope Partnership. This program helps youth with rehabilitation and transition. Without Hope Partnership MacLaren is just another prison that would release young individuals without skills and tools for success into the community.

Hope is that speck of light in a dark tunnel. Are you going to allow us to see or are you going to make us drive blind?

Sincerely,

G.P.S.  
Youth at MYCF