

Department of Community Justice

Juvenile Services Division



March 15, 2017

Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Education
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 5516 - Relating to the Financial Administration of the Oregon Department of Education Youth Development Programs

Co-Chairs Monroe and Smith Warner and Members of the Committee,

Good morning. My name is Deena Corso, and I am the Director of the Juvenile Services Division for Multnomah County's Department of Community Justice. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding SB 5516, and specifically about the Youth Development Division's Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) funding.

JCP Prevention dollars fill a critical need for youth in the Multnomah County juvenile justice system. The funds allow us to offer a specialized treatment program that provides comprehensive mental health and substance use disorder assessments and intensive, outpatient family therapy for medium and high-risk justice-involved youth and their families.

We cannot continue to provide these vital juvenile justice and prevention services for all the youth currently receiving services without stable funding. We are particularly concerned because the Youth Development Division's Estimated Reduction Impacts document (dated 2/1/17) projects a **24% reduction in JCP Prevention funding in 2017-2019** in Multnomah County compared to the current biennium.

Increasing Positive Youth Development Outcomes

Investing in evidence-based services at the county level has resulted in many positive outcomes. Multnomah County's JCP Prevention-funded treatment program has reduced juvenile crime and promoted positive youth development.

Of the 133 youth that received treatment in calendar years 2014 and 2015,
74% did not have a new law violation referral within 12 months of program intake,
74% made academic progress during treatment,
69% increased employment readiness, and
80% showed improvement in problem-solving and emotional regulation skills.

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Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Youth of color, who are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system, often have difficulty accessing culturally-appropriate treatment services. Multnomah County's JCP Prevention-funded treatment program ensures youth of color receive quality clinical assessments and effective treatment. In the first 18 months of the 2015-17 biennium, **70% of youth receiving clinical assessments** were youth of color and **67% of youth receiving treatment** were youth of color.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Effectively serving youth in their community prevents the need for more costly placement in out-of-home residential settings or youth correctional facilities. Of the 133 youth that received treatment in calendar years 2014 and 2015, **94% were not placed in an Oregon Youth Authority residential placement** and **92% were not placed in a youth correctional facility** within 12 months of program intake. In addition, JCP Prevention funds are utilized to leverage additional funds (e.g., Medicaid) in order to build a continuum of services in our community that prevent the need for costly deeper-end services.

Reducing JCP Prevention funding to Multnomah County and other county juvenile departments will reduce vital services to medium and high-risk justice-involved youth and their families, resulting in poorer outcomes for young people and their communities.

For additional information, please contact:

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