

# Department of Community Justice



**TO:** Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

**FROM:** Scott Taylor, Director

**DATE:** March 23, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Testimony on HB 5004 - Department of Corrections

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Co-Chair Winters, Co-Chair Stark, and Members of the committee, for the record, my name is Scott Taylor, Director of Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ). We are responsible of the County releases under Recognizance prior to court, Adult Probation and Post-Prison Supervision, Juvenile Probation, and our regional juvenile detention facility.

Our partnership with the Oregon Department of Corrections has always realized that the work done in the community can directly impact the work within the state institutions and vice versa. I am here in support of the DOC budget and ask that you review the Governor's proposed budget reductions with an eye to how that may affect the safety of your communities.

There is clear research connecting the success of those leaving institutions and connection to the communities they are returning to. In Oregon we work closely with DOC in pre-release planning and in the supervision when placed on post-prison supervision. We are also able to consider options for supervision and services for those placed on post-prison supervision who otherwise would have been sent to prison.

Oregon has a long history of state and county partnership in addressing the supervision of those in the community who have been convicted of crimes. Over 20 years ago when SB 1145 was passed, the state and counties entered into a statutory agreement for the effective supervision and management of those convicted of felonies in Oregon.

In Multnomah county that translates into roughly 6,200 individuals on supervision every day. The current Governor's budget will reduce our state funding by almost \$7 million dollars. This will have an immediate impact on our ability to affect supervision in our communities.

If the budget triggers the "OPT OUT" feature, which allows counties to return responsibility for probation and post-prison supervision to the state DOC, I would project that the costs involved in that transition will be more than the amount saved in the budget reduction. The local engagement will be reduced and thus the partnership will be at risk in those counties. I was the DOC Assistant Director of Community Corrections during the implementation of SB1145 and I am confident the unintended and collateral costs of triggering the "OPT OUT" have not been been factored into the net costs of this reduction.

As an example as part of SB 1145 the local jails now house individuals who prior to SB1145 would have served less than a year in prison. There are currently close to 700 of those individuals daily in county jails, whose costs would return directly to DOC to negotiate with each county for space and costs as the partnership frays.

Multnomah County has been a strong supporter of SB 1145 both in philosophy and dollars. Multnomah County currently contributes more to my department than the statewide 5%, \$13 million dollar statewide reduction proposed in the Governor's budget. The ability to leverage this local commitment and resource will be impacted as funding is reduced at the state level. The partnership is built on both direct and indirect contributions that would not be possible if either party begins to withdraw from the partnership.

Oregon's Community Corrections system is frequently noted as one of the best in the country and the collaborative partnership is one of the main unique features when compared to other states. I encourage your full consideration of this element of the DOC budget.