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SB 895: Statement of Support to Expand Family Sentencing Alternative Pilot Program

Senate Judiciary Chairman Floyd Prozanski, Co-Chair Senator Kim Thatcher, and members of the Oregon Legislative Assembly's Senate Committee on Judiciary, my name is Steve Berger and I am the Director of Washington County Community Corrections. I am providing written testimony on behalf of the Oregon Association of Community Corrections Directors (OACCD).

The OACCD wishes to voice support of SB 895 which seeks to expand the Family Sentencing Alternative Pilot program created during the 2015 regular legislative session.

The Oregon Legislature's HB 3503 created the ten year pilot project: Family Sentencing Alternative Program Pilot (FSAP) to divert qualified offenders who had custody of a minor child at the time of the offense from prison to probation. Based on a successful Washington State program that reduces recidivism and creates better outcomes for kids, the initiative was designed to provide parents an opportunity to achieve accountability through intensive supervision and services in the community while strengthening bonds with their children and increasing family stability.

While our pilot program in Oregon has shown promise, the original pilot limited participation to five specific counties: Deschutes, Jackson, Marion, Multnomah, and Washington. SB 895 provides the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) the ability to broaden the participation. SB 895 further broadens FSAP eligibility by removing restrictions pilot FSAP programs found limiting, such as prior convictions for felony DUII, person crimes, and pregnant females.

The OACCD looks forward to working together with DOC in developing a process for selecting counties to participate in the expanded pilot program. The five participating counties have found this program to be an important alternative for qualified offenders and key in providing important resources to help keep families together.

Thank you for your consideration.

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