

TO: Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

DATE: April 4, 2017

RE: Support for SB 935

Chair Prozanski, and members of the Committee, my name is Truls Neal. I am Deputy Director of Multnomah County Department of Community Justice. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 935.

Multnomah County strongly supports expanding Short Term Trans Leave (STTL) from 90 up to 180 days when appropriate. STTL is an important component of HB 3194 that currently allows 90 day early release to supervision. Since implementation, 45,558 prison bed days have been saved as a result of Multnomah County inmates released to STTL. The Criminal Justice Commission shows that 89% of those released in Multnomah County were successful on STTL.

Multnomah County is committed to helping find ways to reduce prison bed usage. We are proud of the collaboration and partnership that has developed with our public safety partners as a result of implementing the Multnomah County Justice Reinvestment Program, our response to HB 3194. This program is providing front-end assessments, wraparound services, and intensive supervision for offenders being released early from prison as well as those diverted from prison and sentenced directly to probation.

Our commitment includes actively seeking additional ways to reduce prison bed usage. Since the passage of HB 3194, we have been involved in numerous conversations around possible solutions for reducing prison beds.

We are one of five counties taking part in the Family Alternative Sentencing Program. In addition, when forecasts began showing the possible need to open an additional prison due to a growing women's population, Multnomah County, along with several other counties, began to explore ways to work with women who are eligible to be released from prison early.

We view the expansion of STTL of up to 180 days as another viable option to continue to reduce the women's prison population as well as the overall prison population. For parents who are in prison, an early release means they will be able to reunite with their children sooner and begin rebuilding their relationship.

If we have the opportunity to expand the release up to 180 days, Multnomah County is prepared and committed to work with DOC to expand release days when transitions services are identified and an earlier release is appropriate. It is possible that in some situations less than 180 days, but more than a

90 day release on STTL would be appropriate. This bill would give us flexibility in determining an early releases date that is most appropriate.

In summary, I respectfully request that you support SB 935.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Submitted by:

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