

April 10, 2017

Testimony of Jayne Downing
Executive Director, Center for Hope & Safety
Re: Justice Reinvestment 10% Victim Services Funding

Co-Chairs Winters and Stark, and Members of the Public Safety Sub-Committee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Jayne Downing, and for the last 19 years, I have had the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of the Center for Hope & Safety (*formerly Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service*). Our agency serves victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and human trafficking in Marion County.

I am here today to speak in support of the Justice Reinvestment (JRI) funding and specifically the 10% investment in victim services. The 10% Victim Services funding is used across Oregon for services such as shelter, assistance with protection orders, safety planning, and other emergency services that provide critical life-saving services in our community and build a strong safety net for victims throughout our state.

Our program, and all of the community-based nonprofits, appreciate the recognition of our programs as an integral part of the public safety system within our state. Oregon's domestic violence and sexual assault programs provide victims with lifesaving access to safety and support that is unduplicated through the criminal justice system. Our programs meet the full spectrum of victims' needs; whether or not, the offender is ever identified, arrested, prosecuted, or convicted.

The 10% funding allocation has made a tremendous difference for programs like ours. The Center for Hope and Safety has seen a huge increase in the number of victims and survivors coming to us for services. Last year, we received more than 20,000 contacts to our program – double the number from just five years ago. The 10% allocation has meant the addition of an Advocate/Intake Coordinator and Children's Advocate to our program. The Advocate/Intake Coordinator has worked with more than 2,500 victims and survivors since this position was added. The bilingual Children's Coordinator has provided more than 1,500 sessions with children and their parents since her position was added. This means hundreds of children and adults receive individualized and age-appropriate safety planning and other trauma-informed services.

In Marion County, through the support of Commissioner Carlson and the Marion County Public Safety Coordinating Council, additional funds were provided (part of Marion County's 90%) to provide a bilingual Court Support Advocate. This is a unique position, as we are partnering with the Marion County Victim Assistance program to share an advocate. The Court Support Advocate has been trained by both programs and can respond to either program to assist victims with protection orders and any other supportive services needed by the survivor. In addition, the Court Support Advocate responds daily to the Marion County Courthouse during Protection Order hearings. While there, she connects with victims to offer individualized assistance, safety planning, and support. Since beginning in this position the Court Support Advocate has assisted more than 400 victims in our community. We have long dreamed of such a collaborative position in our county and the JRI funding has made this dream a reality.

Center for HOPE & SAFETY



Formerly Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service

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because everyone deserves a life free of violence