

May 22, 2017

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Olson and Williamson, and Members of the Committee,

I am an attorney, a retired Circuit Court judge and, most importantly for this bill, a volunteer within the Department of Corrections. I taught the course leading to a Master Gardener's certificate at Coffee Creek for two years, from 1/15 to 2/17. Over 80 women passed the course during that time.

The reason that SB 690A is critical is that it gives a new start to inmates who have achieved success in prisons. Lettuce Grow (the charity that sponsors my classes) takes surveys of students before the class. Most of my students had only an 8th grade education (or a GED), but all but one of my students overcame their educational deficiencies. They were given a chance--and they succeeded!

Based on my observations, it is clear prisons don't cure their prisoners' presenting problems. But some recognition of their gains during incarceration would be invaluable upon their release.

Please pass this bill, and contact me at [503-295-6419](tel:503-295-6419) if I can add to the discussion.

Kristena A. LaMar
Circuit Court Judge (Ret.)