



Oregon Coalition

Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

Monday, February 13, 2017

To:

Senator Jackie Winters, Co-Chair

Representative Duane Stark, Co-Chair

CC:

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

Julie Neburka, Committee Coordinator

RE: Written Testimony in **Support of Funding the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission**

The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV) advocates on behalf of 50+ tribal and community based, non-profit domestic and sexual violence programs. We support your local programs by providing technical assistance, community education, training in prevention, and supporting coordinated emergency medical and legal response to these extremely personal crimes. We strive to ensure that the voices of domestic and sexual violence survivors are heard, and that the experiences of survivors inform both the work we do – and the work you are doing today. Thank you for your willingness to listen to our testimony today regarding the importance of funding the Criminal Justice Commission at the level necessary for them to continue their vitally important work.

When the Oregon Legislature passed the Justice Reinvestment Act (HB 3194) in 2013, it demonstrated a willingness to tackle the serious nature of sexual and domestic violence in a meaningful way. It averted the need to build a new prison and saved taxpayers an estimated \$300 million over the following five years. This initial investment was critical to address these life and death issues and it has already saved lives.

The numbers are showing that the justice reinvestment strategy is working, and Oregon counties are demonstrating that they can work successfully with increased resources. In one year, from 2013 to 2014, we saw a 3.8 percent drop in prison intakes and we have seen an increase in the number of shelter requests relating to emergency domestic violence situations. This is due in large part to the increased awareness of and access to services afforded by the Justice Reinvestment Act. However, there is still work to be done, as it is unconscionable to force victims to return to violent homes, oftentimes with children whose safety is on the line.

The Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) has done a remarkable job of utilizing reinvestment dollars in a responsible and effective manner to help victims access shelter, support, and services in communities across Oregon. For this reason, we firmly believe the legislature should continue to fund the CJC at the budget levels they determine will be necessary for the next biennium.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Niki Terzieff", written in a cursive style.

Niki Terzieff
Oregon Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence