



## ALEX CUYLER

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DATE: February 13, 2017

TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Public Safety

RE: HB 5005, relating to the financial administration of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

Co- Chair Senator Winters and Representative Stark and Members of the Committee:

Lane County has placed the Justice Reinvestment Appropriation for the 17-19 biennium into the top-tier of its legislative priorities for the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. We would urge the sub-Committee to recommend at least a current service level budget for this agency.

Lane County has been involved with Justice Reinvestment since its inception. In fact, the passage of HB 3194 in 2013 could not have come at a more opportune moment for the County, as our voters approved passage of a local option tax in May, 2013 that specifically earmarked dollars to open much needed jail beds. Preceding both the passage of our jail levy and HB 3194, the county's public safety system had been exceedingly stressed by the decline in federal forest revenues which were critical to the adequate funding of our public safety system.

The jail bed levy restored jail operations only, and the beauty of HB 3194 and the new state money for the Justice Reinvestment Grant Program was that it created new opportunities for both pre- and post-incarceration. Thus our community bought itself a sanction program, and the state JRI grant bolstered wrap around services to help our residents break the cycles of crime which drain state and local resources. As we work now to renew the local option levy in May of this year, we again are counting on Justice Reinvestment to play a key supporting role.

We have been overwhelmingly impressed with the staff and output of the Criminal Justice Commission. The outcomes are clear; justice reinvestment helped Lane County significantly slow the rate at which our residents are sent to the state's prisons. Combined with similar work across Oregon, the vision and promise of Justice Reinvestment is proved with each prison population forecast. Fiscally, there is far less pressure on the Legislature to fund the construction and operation of prison facilities.

This said the Commission cannot sustain the local results with human resources alone; it must have the fiscal resources to keep the local collaborations which are key to this success engaged at their respective tables. We recognize the Agency Request Budget, at \$52.7M is beyond reach. But the Governor's budget, at \$32M, will severely strain the still nascent work of this Agency. We urge an appropriation of \$39M for the Justice Reinvestment Grant program, and \$12M for the Treatment Court Grant program.

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY