



## Legislative Testimony

### OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

February 21, 2019

The Honorable Floyd Prozanski, Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary

#### **RE: Senate Bill 495**

Co-Chair Prozanski and members of the committee, I am Craig Prins, Inspector General for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am here to provide information related to SB 495 and answer any questions.

#### **What the Bill Does:**

With limited exceptions, SB 495 prohibits the use of dogs to intimidate or control individuals confined in a correctional facility, youth corrections facility, or the state hospital.

#### **Background Information:**

SB 495 came as a result of a local correctional facility using police canines to gain compliance. As an agency, DOC does not use dogs to gain compliance or extricate individuals from their cells. However, the department operates dog-training programs in several correctional facilities located across the state and has used dogs for the detection of contraband.

Dog-training programs have positive effects on the rehabilitation of adults in custody (AICs). They improve self-esteem, patience, social skills, and teach AICs to help others. They also help normalize the institutional setting and bring a calming effect to the environment.

While DOC does not currently use dogs for drug detection, we are exploring implementation of a detection program in which dogs would play an important role – both for searching AICs for contraband and preventing drugs from entering facilities.

Given DOC's current use of dogs in training programs and potential use in contraband detection, it is important to clarify the bill's requirements are not intended to interfere with the dog-training programs and are not intended to prevent dogs from being used for contraband searches and tracking.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

#### *Submitted by:*

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