

March 4<sup>th</sup> 2019

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety:

Having been incarcerated as a youth with the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and having gone through their vocational program in the mid-70s I am now retired, and am happy to testify to the fact that the Okla. DOC efforts in vocational rehabilitation were key to my not returning to a life of crime, and to my long-term life career as a machinist.

I'm writing to ask you to fund the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) at its current service level and to consider additional investments that would help it mitigate risks in key areas. Doing so will allow it to continue its nationally-recognized work to adopt the developmental approach, use data to improve youth outcomes, and to reduce the use of isolation while maintaining staff and youth safety. Funding OYA at current service level will help the agency continue these transformational efforts to promote safer communities for all Oregonians.

I also urge you to help OYA complete its three-biennium effort to align its budget with its services—which can be accomplished within OYA's current service level funding. Having a transparent and accurate budget is good stewardship and it allows Oregonians to better understand the needs and risks within OYA's budget. Please support the completion of this plan.

Additional investments can also help the agency address risks in key areas. As you know, Oregon's Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) — one of only three statewide juvenile justice databases in the nation — needs to be modernized to ensure it remains useful. Adding staff in strategic roles such as mental health, skill development, culturally-responsive services for underserved youth, foster care, and staff recruitment could do a lot to help the agency mitigate identified risks to its initiatives and to the youth it serves. Just as important would be positions bolstering key agency oversight functions in its Professional Standards Office and internal audit.

I urge you to do all you can to support the wonderful work that OYA is doing with Oregon's youth and continue the momentum it has developed.

Respectfully,  
Dan H. Carton  
970-481-0038  
5198 Grand Ave.  
Florence, OR 97439