

2/20/17

The Honorable Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
The Honorable Duane Stark, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

I write to you as a private citizen concerned about public safety, a long term volunteer with the Oregon Youth Authority, and finally as a community partner of OYA; I am a faculty member at a public university in Oregon that offers courses inside MYCF.

I urge you to support full funding for all of OYA's current priorities. The Youth Reformation System is a predictive analysis model to inform decisions at all levels of Oregon's juvenile justice system. This model creates better outcomes for youth and for the community; it supports youth in returning to society ready to take part in productive, healthy, crime-free lives. Additionally, this model reduces victimization and reduces taxpayer expense.

Additionally, OYA has continued and enhanced its comprehensive culture change initiative known as Positive Human Development. PHD is Oregon's strength based take on the developmental model of Juvenile Justice, a nationally recognized best practice. Under the PHD approach high expectations and accountability are the outgrowth of safety and security and caring and supportive relationships. Maintaining funding levels for OYA will help the agency continue these transformational efforts to the benefit of the youth they serve and the safety of the public.

Finally, OYA is in the midst of implementing its 10-year facilities strategic plan that is consolidating and updating physical environments that serve Oregon's most at risk youth. These projects bring the agency's physical environments in line with best practices that research shows deliver positive outcomes for youth and public safety.

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. It is imperative that the state maintain the OYA budget for public safety and reformation and allow OYA to continue the work its doing that will continue to protect the public and have meaningful impacts for education, prevention and economic development for Oregon.

Thank you.

Deborah Smith Arthur, M.A., J.D.
Assistant Professor
Portland State University
503-725-5831