

Central and Eastern Oregon Juvenile Justice Consortium (CEOJJC)

An intergovernmental organization of the counties of: Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jefferson, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Wheeler

Chair of CEOJJC:

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Written Testimony
**JOINT COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY**
March 6, 2019

The Honorable Jackie Winters, Co-Chair
The Honorable Carla Piluso, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

The Central and Eastern Oregon Juvenile Justice Consortium, also known as CEOJJC, is a 17 county ORS Chapter 190 intergovernmental organization established in 1986 by ordinances passed by the county commissioners in all member counties. The work of the Consortium supports the efforts of its member counties to improve the effectiveness of their local juvenile justice systems.



I'm writing this letter on behalf of 17 counties in Central and Eastern Oregon to urge you to fund the Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) at its current service level, as well as, to consider additional investments proposed by the agency.

- The complexity of current referrals and the multiple service needs of these youth and their families have significantly increased. Because specialized treatment resources are either no longer available or have not been effective with this population, the Oregon Youth Authority has become the default secure treatment resource for youth with significant substance use disorders and mental health related conditions;
- In our region, over 50% of youth on county caseloads have DHS histories. Between 70%-91% of all youth have a diagnosed drug and alcohol history, and 76% of parents have histories of alcohol/drug use. 76% of youth who were committed to OYA from the region have a co-occurring mental health diagnosis;

- The juvenile crime prevention and diversion grants are absolutely essential to helping counties effectively manage a number of high-risk youth at the local level who would have otherwise been committed to OYA. This is especially true in rural counties where resources are very limited. If the current levels of resources to counties are reduced, judges will be forced to commit more youth to OYA. If these youth could have been managed effectively at the local level with diversion resources, this results in a “cost shift” to the state that will result in even more expensive interventions;
- Juvenile crime and related youth problems are very visible in rural communities, and so are the victims of juvenile crime. Because of this, rural communities attempt to do early intervention balancing accountability with reformation. Certain youth however need targeted diversion services because of their risk profile and multiple service needs. County juvenile departments and the courts will continue to need the specialized and intensive resources of OYA for high-risk and high-need youth;

We would like to sincerely thank the Oregon Youth Authority for recognizing the unique challenges rural counties face. We look forward to our continued intergovernmental partnerships and support. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this public testimony.

Sincerely,



Molly Rogers, MJM
Director, Wasco County Department of Youth Services
Chair, Central and Eastern Oregon Juvenile Justice Consortium