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TO: House Committee on Judiciary

From: Latino Network

DA: March 11, 2019

RE: Support of Accountability and Equity Act (HB 3064).

Dear Chair Williamson, Vice-Chair Gorsek, Vice-Chair Spreger and members of the committee,

We are writing to you today in support of Accountability and Equity Act (HB 3064). We hope that you will make the right choice today and support this important legislation. As you know, Oregon's demographics are rapidly changing. Latinos currently represent 12% of Oregon's population, but that number is expected to continue to expand. Latinos are a promising part of Oregon's future and excellence. At the same time, Latinos are over-represented in Oregon's justice systems. Justice Reinvestment in Oregon has been successful, and yet we have not eliminated disparities for Latino people or other communities of color. For example, the Relative Rate Index is just slightly higher for Latino youth entering the justice system relative to the general population. However, the deeper into the system Latino youth penetrate the higher their RRI rate jumps.

HB 3064 creates a solid mechanism to improve Justice Reinvestment in Oregon, by supporting Latino youth. Equally importantly, this bill holds each Oregon county accountable, in receiving Justice Reinvestment dollars to effectively implement their goals to direct eligible people away from prisons. Additionally, it creates opportunities for a fair and equitable system through the Equity Advisory Committee. This Committee would focus on reducing disparities that have persisted despite overall declines in both juvenile and adult crime.

Our organization is dedicated to providing transformative services to Latino youth, families and communities in the areas of education, leadership and family stability. Our Youth Empowerment and Violence Prevention Programs in Multnomah and Washington Counties support Latino youth and their families that have become justice involved. With over a decade of experience serving these families, we have learned the importance of meeting youth at their first contact with law enforcement or intervene with services to youth on probation at the highest levels of risk. We have provided services in the community to address

the root causes of delinquency and youth violence is cost effective and prevents future penetration into the justice system.

Local programs to support juveniles or adults that qualify to be directed away from prisons delivered by culturally specific organizations provide self-determination by offering offenders the choice to participate in programs that reflects and honors their culture, traditions, and home language while hold them accountable for their actions. When we treat youth or adults who have offended as whole human beings, that come from communities and that will return and be welcomed to communities, we offer hope, one of the biggest drivers of change.

Thank you for the success on Justice Reinvestment to date. I urge you to support continued improvement on reducing disparities in justice by supporting the Accountability and Equity Act (HB 3064).

Thank you,

Amanda Manjarrez  
Advocacy Director