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TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary

From: Latino Network

DA: March 27, 2019

RE: Support Youth Justice Reform Bills

Dear Chair Prazanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

Latino Network urges you to support the Youth Justice Reform package- Senate Bills 966, 968, 969, 1008. Latino Network is a culturally specific nonprofit serving Latino youth and families in Multnomah and Washington counties. Our organization provides transformative services to Latino youth, families and communities in the areas of education, leadership and family stability.

Our Youth Empowerment and Violence Prevention Programs, provided in partnership with Multnomah and Washington counties, support Latino youth who have become involved with the criminal justice system. Our programming addresses the root causes of delinquency and youth violence by providing wrap around support for the youth and their families, is cost effective, and prevents future involvement in the justice system. We have found that when we treat youth and adults who have offended as whole human beings, we offer hope, which is one of the biggest drivers of change.

SB 966 would provide an important review of a young person's case before transfer to adult prison.

SB 968 would put our laws in line with the federal constitution by allowing a person who commits a crime before 18 to be eligible for parole after serving 15 years.

SB 969 eliminates mandatory adult prosecution for certain offenses when a person is 15,16, or 17 at the time of the offense.

SB 1008 gives young people convicted as adults access to "Second Look", a program that would allow them to have an additional hearing halfway through their sentence. A judge would decide if the youth has been rehabilitated and

would allow them to serve the rest their sentence under community-based supervision.

These bills allow youth in the criminal justice system with an opportunity to improve their lives and their community. We believe in the importance of allowing young people a chance to learn from their mistakes and grow into their potential. Latino Network urges you to support Youth Sentencing Reform to give youth in Oregon the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Sincerely,

Amanda Manjarrez
Advocacy Director
Latino Network