

Department of Community Justice



TO: Co-Chairs Winters and Piluso and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Public Safety

DATE: March 28, 2018

RE: Testimony on SB 5504, Department of Corrections

Co-Chairs Winters, Piluso, and members of the Committee, I am Erika Preuitt, Director of Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ). The Department of Community Justice is responsible for Adult Probation and Post-Prison Supervision and Juvenile Probation, among other services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 5504. I want to start my testimony by recognizing our partnership with the other 35 Oregon Counties and the Department of Corrections (DOC). We work closely with DOC in pre-release planning and supervision of those placed on post-prison supervision. Our goal is to help justice involved individuals reenter their communities and have the services they need to stay there productively and safely, allowing them to restore their families and help build their communities.

We are able to do this successfully because we have had investment from the State. However, as my colleague Jeff Wood outlined in his testimony, the current proposals threaten this investment and the level of supervision and services we will be able to deliver. Multnomah County strongly urges you to fully fund Community Corrections at the Actual Cost Study funding level of \$319 million.

With full funding, we will avoid having to take significant reductions and will be able to enhance important services such as housing and treatment. Currently, based on the Governor's proposed budget, in conjunction with county reductions, we are currently facing a budget reduction of close to \$3 million for our Adult Services Division. We will likely have to cut deeper based on the Co-Chairs proposed 5% reduction. These reductions include:

- Re-entry efforts: Reducing staff that help coordinate transition into housing and services, and complete field investigations. Some of these tasks will be diverted back to case carrying Probation-Parole Officers which will have an impact on service levels.
- Field supervision: Reducing Probation-Parole Officers and closing our Forensics Lab which provides valuable service for our Sex Crimes, Gang and Domestic Violence teams.
- Wraparound Services: Reducing our in-house cognitive based programming by half, reducing the number of dual diagnosis in-patient treatment beds, and a contract for local in-patient treatment program.

SB1145 allows counties to invest funding and leverage county dollars when available to address the needs in our specific communities. In Multnomah County this means supervising individuals with gang involvement, opioid addiction, or homelessness. In addition, 46% of adults supervised in Multnomah County are high risk, which requires more time and money to successfully supervise. The time study took a comprehensive look at the work that goes into serving the high risk, resulting in the increased real cost.

The good news is that with the current investments, we are making progress. Our recidivism rates for the high risk have consistently been lower than the state average. The latest numbers show one year rearrest rates were 47% compared to the State average at 62%. Additionally, we are able to invest in programs that work. With a need and commitment to address racial and ethnic disparities in our system, we have been able to invest in culturally specific programming. For example, over the last several years we have funded a program that is tailored to 17-25 year old African American males who have been convicted of felonies. It provides direct case management, professional mentorship, life skills education, and participation in pro-social activities. Early results show that the majority of participants were not re-arrested within 6 months of the program start date. In addition, at current funding levels we provide approximately 340 adults with housing per month. This number could increase should we be funded at the Actual Cost Study level.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Submitted by:

Erika Preuitt, Director
Multnomah County Department of Community Justice