

To: House Committee on Judiciary

From: members of Justice Advocates

Date: April 2, 2019

Re: Support for **HB 3224, DA Policy Development and Transparency**

Chair Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chairs Chris Gorsek and Sherrie Sprenger, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

District Attorneys in the State of Oregon are elected officials. Their practices and policies should reflect concern for public safety as a whole, not just the number of convictions they are able to achieve or how many individuals they succeed in sending to prison. Research has shown evidence-based practices work to both prevent and reduce crime as well as bring a better understanding of those who commit crimes.

HB 3224 is a bill which should be passed. It will require DAs' offices to develop written policies of their criminal justice procedures and make these policies available to the public. This bill also provides for updates every 5 years in order to reflect knowledge, new technologies and community changes.

We care very much about accountability of our public officials in the criminal justice system and have every right for public oversight. Defendants should not be unfairly charged with multiple crimes or threatened into accepting a plea bargain out of fear of a Mandatory Minimum Sentence. Various alternatives to incarceration should be an option if this could lead to the best outcome for both reform and public safety. Minorities must be protected from disparities in the application of criminal justice. Victims must be provided with the services they need. The citizens of all 36 Oregon counties are entitled to policies which are open to the public and provide **Justice and Safety** for their communities.

HB 3224 is essential to making this happen and we urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Sally Joughin

Sue Caddell

Tony Funchess

Alicia Polacok

Robert Reynolds

Gloria Halper

Liz Willbach

Judith Armatta

Layla Assem

Justice Advocates

a grassroots criminal justice organization working for
the elimination of unfair and harmful practices by courts and prisons

JusticeAdvocatesPDX@gmail.com