



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 99-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

April 24, 2019

To: House Judiciary Committee
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair
Representative Chris Gorsek, Vice-Chair
Representative Sherrie Sprenger, Vice-Chair

Re: SB 1008 – A Juvenile Offender Sentencing – Support

The League supports alternatives at all stages of the criminal justice process and community based programs. The League believes that comprehensive transitional programs are essential for successful completion of rehabilitation for each inmate released or paroled from a correctional facility.


The bill now stipulates that a juvenile cannot be sentenced to life imprisonment and is eligible for release on parole after 15 years. The required hearing will consider the diminished culpability of minors, the history of juvenile offenses, trauma and the mental health diagnosis. The League supports waiver hearings for juvenile offenders and decisions to proceed in juvenile or adult court be made by a judge

Juveniles committed to the Department of Corrections currently are placed in the Oregon Youth Authority correctional facilities. If the sentence extends past their 25th birthday, they are transferred to the Department of Corrections for the remainder of their sentence. OYA directors report that many of those originally charged as juveniles succeed in behavior, school and vocational programs before age 25.

The League supports a Second Look Hearing for those who have demonstrated improved behavior and successful completion of school and vocational programs. These young people can be supervised on parole if they are granted an early release, which can be revoked if they violate the law or parole conditions. If they continue to be successful, it is an incentive to be in the community and a financial savings for the Department of Corrections. Transfer to the adult facility could have negative impacts that would be avoided by the Second Look Release. Whereas an early release reinforces the good behavior. It's a win-win for both the youth offender and the correctional system.

We strongly support the amendments to the statutes. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.


Norman Turrill
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