

HB 2912 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Judiciary

Action Date: 03/04/21

Action: Do pass and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference

Vote: 10-0-0-0

Yeas: 10 - Bynum, Dexter, Helm, Kropf, Lewis, Morgan, Noble, Power, Wallan, Wilde

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Amie Fender-Sosa, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 2/9, 3/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Extends pilot program which provides services to adults in custody at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility to address legal issues related to community reentry and reintegration, including employment, housing, benefits, and domestic violence. Updates language. Appropriates \$800,000 to the Criminal Justice Commission to fund the program. Sunsets the program December 31, 2024. Declares an emergency and takes effect July 1, 2021.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Re*Membering Program and the Women's Justice Project
- Variety of legal issues faced by women in Coffee Creek
- House Bill 2631 (2019)
- Collateral consequences of criminal histories creating challenges for reintegration
- Cost-benefit analysis of investing in legal services for justice-involved individuals

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Incarcerated individuals have limited access to attorneys and resources to engage in civil legal work. Federal regulations prohibit legal services organizations, such as Legal Aid Services of Oregon, from providing civil legal services to incarcerated individuals. 45 C.F.R. § 1637. To protect incarcerated individuals' constitutional right to access to the courts, the Department of Corrections provides access to legal libraries, but those resources are prioritized by rule for adults in custody who are raising legal challenges to their conviction or sentence or bringing action related to a condition of their confinement. OAR 291-139-0110 & 0120. In 2019, House Bill 2631 was passed by the Oregon Legislative Assembly, creating a pilot program to address some of these concerns, with a sunset date of December 31, 2021.

House Bill 2912 would extend the pilot program which provides services to adults in custody at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility to address legal issues related to community reentry and reintegration, including employment, housing, benefits, and domestic violence.