

Date: February 25, 2021  
To: House Committee on Judiciary  
From: Gabriela Saldaña-López  
Re: Support for Justice Reinvestment 2021, HB 2002

Chair Bynum, Vice-Chair Noble, Vice-Chair Power, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gabriela Saldana-Lopez, and I am here as a East Portland community member. I believe Oregon should have a fairer and more effective justice system that ensures equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.

As a person who has family that has been affected by the carceral system this legislation is important to me because we should be investing into our communities not upholding laws that further punishes them.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement have exposed systemic injustices in starker light. The system, built atop our long history of white supremacy, continues to disproportionately harm people of color, impacts of which create generational trauma and poverty. With the criminal justice system's extreme focus on punishment, victims and survivors of crime — particularly survivors of color — do not receive adequate support and are sometimes further harmed by the public safety system.

Legislative leaders from the BIPOC Caucus together with this coalition are working to change this. We can achieve true community safety and justice by shrinking our corrections system and investing in policies and programs that equitably strengthen our communities, including culturally specific programs, housing, crime survivor services, and addiction treatment.

Justice Reinvestment 2021 will build on our past success and bring us closer toward a public safety system built on accountability, healing, and opportunity. HB 2002 will:

- Reform 1990s-era mandatory minimum sentencing and strengthen the role of courts to match the prison sentence to the specific facts of each case. Change mandatory Measure 11 sentences into guidelines; and move sentences for three lower-level crimes (Rob II, Assault II, and Sex Abuse I) from 60 months to 30 months to address overrepresentation of Native American, Black, and Latinx populations.
- Support survivors by increasing funding for and access to community-based victim services. Change Justice Reinvestment (JRI) funding structure to allocate 15% of available funds to victims, instead of 10%; make JRI victim funding unrestricted to include services for health and healing; and fund victim services that support victims who are incarcerated.

- Reinvest in culturally specific, community-based services by dedicating 20% of funds to culturally specific organizations.

HB 2002 ensures that people who have caused harm are responsible for that harm, after which they would have an opportunity to rebuild their lives. It also ensures that crime survivors have the resources they need to heal and invests in culturally specific services for communities of color throughout Oregon.

We call on leaders in the legislature to support HB 2002 and enact these critically needed changes that are aligned with Oregonians' vision for a public safety system rooted in equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Gabriela Saldana-Lopez