

I am a victim of two violent crimes- as a child an armed robbery and as an adult a rape. I have read arguments in support and opposition of this bill and done research in this area.

I support the two areas of funding outlined in this bill- to Reimagine Oregon and to victim services and culturally specific services. I believe that we have to deepen these investments to address inequities and continue work on structural changes in our community.

I oppose the components of this bill related to ending mandatory minimums. As a survivor of two significant events in my life I can almost support the notion of ending mandatory minimums, in fact I understand and agree with many of the arguments in favor of ending these minimums. The arguments make sense to me, until you get to the part about taking the current mandatory minimums and replacing them with presumptive sentences that are substantially less. I was shocked. One can say that the judge will decide. Okay, well as an adult male I was raped (albeit in another state) and I can tell you that the judge was not unbiased. Bias exists in all systems and we must continue to make it our imperative to address it. This is not an endpoint, it is a continuous improvement process. However, to purport that judges are singularly the unbiased entity in our system is disingenuous. Similarly this bill feels very disingenuous to crime victims- the "guise" is that it ends mandatory minimums and adds judge's discretion—that is great—but it does much more—it LOWERS the recommended sentences and that is wrong. Please take the time to compare the mandatory minimum sentence chart for Oregon for similar crimes in other states, ours are already low.

Supporters of this bill often mention additional grace should be given for first time offenders. It is an assumption that the first time being caught is the first time a crime was committed. More importantly the impact of first time victimization of a violent crime is no less traumatic, trust me, I know after watching my mother brutally beaten by armed intruders in our home. Not all armed robbery is a ski masked intruder who sneaks in and out with the family jewels in the middle of the night. The crimes outlined in this bill are those that include graphic and extreme violence. I would have a lot more respect and support for the supporters of this bill if they acknowledged this and acknowledged the facts- these are the individuals in prison, not the lower end of these types of crimes. By ignoring this and ignoring these victims you are alienating those who have experienced significant harm at the hands of others.

It is also my understanding the ballot measure eleven crimes for juveniles has already been repealed. That is a reasonable step. The changes proposed in HB 2002 apply to adults and it doesn't just end mandatory minimums it actually reduces the sentences and offers time off for good behavior. I don't get to heal quicker or have less impact in my life in the short and long term as a victim with good behavior. Yes, rehabilitate people- support their healing but don't incentivize doing the decent human thing of owning your mistakes and doing the work to change. Just like us victims who have to do the work to heal!

Respectfully, Robert