

February 25, 2021

Chair Bynum and Members of the Judicial Committee;

My Name is David Sparks. I am a Parole and Probation Officer in Douglas County. I serve as the AFSCME president for our local union, a defensive tactics instructor, and have been the probation officer for our H.O.P.E Drug Court program for the last 3 years.

I want to thank Chair Bynum, the committee, and the sponsors of this bill for their efforts in effecting positive change in our criminal justice system and for equality. I work with some of the most compassionate people in our system and believe too that we all recognize the need for some improvement.

I want to challenge the committee, however, that HB 2002 is not the bill needed to effect positive change. HB 2002 only serves to reduce accountability for egregious behavior and criminality across the board for all offenders. As I listened to testimony today, I felt the emotion from the proponents and the opponents of the bill alike, however, I did not hear any facts to indicate that this bill will have any positive impact on our criminal justice system or racial or ethnic equality. When we make changes based on emotion rather than facts, research, and forethought we are destined for failure.

It was clear that the sponsorship of this bill arose out of committees, leaders, and organizations within the greater Portland area and fails to recognize the rest of the State of Oregon. The sponsors do not appear to have asked for or gained any input from law enforcement or community corrections outside of the Metro area.

This "one size fits all" approach to Community Corrections and Policing is exactly what the supporters of this bill appear to be fighting against.

To be honest as a lifelong citizen of this state I am terrified of what my community is going to look like 2 years from now with the continued passing of bills designed to eliminate legal accountability for those who commit crimes and wish to do harm to other citizens.

I urge this committee and the sponsors of this bill to go back to the drawing board, work with the agencies, and draw up something that we can all be proud of.

Thank You