



## Legislative Testimony

### OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

February 1, 2022

The Honorable Janelle Bynum, Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary

#### **RE: House Bill 4146**

Chair Bynum and members of the committee, my name is Kelly Raths, and I serve as Acting Assistant Director of the Correctional Services Division for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am here today to provide testimony regarding House Bill (HB) 4146.

#### **What the Bill Does:**

HB 4146 requires the Governor to appoint a corrections gender-responsive coordinator, and the Department of Administrative Services to contract with a third party to assess Coffee Creek Correctional Facility (CCCF). The assessment would evaluate CCCF programs and practices to determine if they are gender responsive, culturally responsive, and trauma informed; and establish a baseline for strategic planning, policy recommendation, and improved protection of individuals at CCCF.

#### **Background Information:**

In 2019, when HB 3300 (which would have directed DOC to designate an employee of CCCF as a gender-responsive officer) failed, a gender-responsive workgroup was established to review gender-responsive and trauma-informed practices at CCCF.

Due to the complexity and scope of issues, the workgroup recommended a formal assessment be completed to properly identify CCCF issues, the institution's strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement. The results of the assessment can be used to support gender-responsiveness training and drive enhancements to women's programming. DOC lacks the resources necessary to properly conduct the assessment. DOC, along with other members of the work group agree such an assessment needs to be conducted by a neutral, third-party expert.

Such an assessment for women's correctional services exists. The National Institute of Corrections, in partnership with national experts, developed a formal assessment to study issues specific to women in custody and on community supervision. This Gender-Informed Practice Assessment (GIPA) is recommended to all federal, state, and community-based organizations to evaluate how their agency provides evidenced-based, gender-responsive, and trauma-informed practices to justice-involved women in their care.

The GIPA assesses 12 domains and includes pre-onsite work; onsite assessment of institution activities across all shifts including staff, leadership, observations, and various focus groups; evaluating and scoring gathered materials; report writing; and presentation. I have provided a copy of the GIPA domain descriptions. Ultimately, the GIPA can identify broad areas of strength and challenge, as well as those which require more in-depth assessment.

DOC believes the study required by HB 4146 would benefit and further DOC's ongoing efforts to provide evidence-based, gender-responsive, and trauma-informed programming and services at CCCF and we welcome this resource. A neutral third-party assessment would give us meaningful data and direction on which DOC can meaningfully collaborate with community partners.

A limited duration position will be needed to provide the onsite administrative support anticipated to schedule and facilitate meetings with AICs, staff, and stakeholders, and to meet other facility access and assessment needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

*Submitted by:*

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