



**Date:** 2/3/2022

**RE: Comments on SB 1510 -1**

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

Central City Concern (CCC) is a non-profit direct service organization that provides integrated primary and behavioral health care, supportive and affordable housing, and employment services to people impacted by homelessness in the Tri-County area. Central City Concern operates about 2,100 units of affordable housing, serves 9,000 patients annually through our 12 Federally Qualified Health Centers, makes 1,200 job placements annually and operates social services for the community justice programs in Multnomah and Clackamas counties. **Our programs and properties span Senate Districts 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25; and House Districts 33, 36, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48 and 50**

Due to the long history of criminalizing substance use disorder and poverty, many of our clients, residents and patients have had some level of engagement with the criminal and legal systems. Some people come to our services as a direct referral for reentry or diversion services, but many more come to CCC because they want to change their lives and the criminal legal system is just another barrier to long-term stability they must grapple with.

One of our reentry programs, called [Flip the Script](#), a culturally specific program for people who identify as African American or Black, has been leading our advocacy work regarding the criminal and legal systems. Current participants and alumni of this group gather on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month to discuss challenges, often directly with elected officials and leaders in state departments. One of the issues top of mind for the group is improving parole and probation supervision. Employers and landlords continue to deny housing to people on active supervision. Supervision can last several years, perpetuating housing and economic instability, that instability during that entire supervision period. We know from reviewing internal data that a rent-responsible adult with independent income is the least likely to be re-incarcerated, yet these are the very things we deny people when we try to keep them in a system of incarceration even while they are living in community.

Those of us who provide services to this population feel supervision should be a tool that supports successful and stable re-entry. Our services and the system need to work together with a shared goal of helping people to find their path to success, and we believe that supervision should not be a tool to intimidate nor cause unnecessary harm, stress, and trauma. Parole and probation require people to do many things. There are conditions a person may not have the skills, ability, and resources to achieve on their



own that supervision could help with. Supervisors should work to connect individuals to resources, not be a shadow looking for a person to fail.

Legislation alone can't make the culture and mission changes we need. That is why this bill calls for new training requirements that focus on building the skills of parole and probation supervisors to be culturally responsive and trauma-informed in their work.

SB 1510 is needed to help us transition a system focused on punishment to one focused on successful reentry; we need to see changes in reporting, visitations and training.

Central City Concern is a member of the Coalition that participated in Chair Prozanski's interim public safety workgroup that helped to develop the policies in SB 1510. We believe Oregon should have a fairer and more effective justice system that ensures safety, success, racial equity, and healing. Our Advocacy Coordinator, Billy Anfield, provided invited testimony on this bill during the February 2<sup>nd</sup> committee meeting and our Community Outreach Coordinator Gary Cobb will also provide oral testimony at the Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup> public hearing.

Please support SB 1510 and enact these critically needed changes that are aligned with Oregonians' vision for a public safety system rooted in equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.