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Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon

Date: February 3, 2022
To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
From: Cassie Purdy, Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon
Re: Support for Transforming Justice 2022, SB 1510

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

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon strongly supports Senate Bill 1510 to improve public safety in Oregon and reform our criminal justice system because we believe every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity. As a member of the Fair Shot for All Coalition, we support this policy as part of the 2022 legislative agenda and the ongoing work to create a fairer and more effective justice system that ensures equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity.

Reproductive freedom will never be achieved until all Oregonians are able to choose when and whether to become a parent; have the recognition and resources to care for themselves and their families and communities; and have equitable access to justice, education, and opportunity.

Widespread racial disparities exist throughout Oregon's criminal justice system. Black people represent 2.2 percent of Oregon's population but 9.3 percent of the state's prison population. Additionally, both ethnic and racial disparities were identified in traffic and pedestrian stop data submitted by the Oregon State Police, according to 2019 reporting from the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission.

Incarceration greatly exacerbates the harms of racial targeting by police. Each time we lock someone up, we also sentence their family members to traumatic separation and financial hardship. Two in three families had difficulty meeting basic needs as a result of their loved one's incarceration. Seventy percent of these families were caring for children under 18.

Transforming Justice 2022 (SB 1510) will improve success for people on probation and parole with a rulemaking process that can prevent, in some instances, parole and probation officers from visiting the people they supervise at work. The rules will also cover when certain people on supervision can report remotely

People who have been held accountable for harm should have a chance to succeed. Excessively long and burdensome parole and probation sentences disrupt a person's life, family, and employment, and prevent people from rebuilding their lives and thriving -- barriers that disproportionately affect Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color. By eliminating unnecessary barriers for people on parole and probation, we can build on people's strengths and promote stable homes, families, and economies

SB 1510 would also create the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program to fund services that promote racial equity, address racial disparities prevalent in Oregon's criminal justice system, and reduce prison use.

When we invest public safety dollars into our communities, we reduce prison use and recidivism and increase safety. Our current approach prevents essential public safety grant funds from meeting the needs of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color. By changing how public safety dollars are invested, communities across Oregon will have better access to the resources they need to begin to feel safe, heal, and rebuild their lives.

SB 1510 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.

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

Sincerely,
Cassie Purdy
Political Director
Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon