



To: Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation

From: Paul Solomon, Sponsors Inc.

Date: February 8, 2022

RE: Support for Senate bill 1584, Oregon Justice for Exonerees Act

Chair Prozanski and members of the committee,

On behalf of Sponsors, I write in support of Senate Bill 1584, the Oregon Justice for Exonerees Act. Sponsors, Inc., is a national leader in the delivery of Reentry services. To assist people to reenter their communities we offer a broad range of services—case management, employment assistance, housing, mental health services and mentoring—that people need in order to be successful upon returning to their community.

Our experiences with our clients, data, and research show us that the negative effects of a conviction rarely end when a person has completed their criminal sentence. Imagine then, the compounding impact on those who have been incarcerated for a crime that they did not commit. Not only do these individuals need help finding housing, transportation and health services, they have also experienced years of lost income, missed career opportunities, and time spent with their family and loved ones.

When we err, we should take responsibility, and SB 1584 is an important tool for fixing some of the wrongs in our criminal/legal system.

Oregon has an opportunity to make right, in one small but very meaningful way, the challenges faced by people who have been exonerated of the crimes they were once convicted of. Passing this legislation would pave the way for people to receive compensation for the years that they spent wrongfully incarcerated. Oregon would join 37 other states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government in providing this type of compensation.

Providing exonerees with financial compensation (based on the number of years spent incarcerated and/or on parole or probation and services such as counseling, housing assistance, and financial literacy) will tremendously help individuals move on with their lives and provide some support to their families and loved ones.

We urge your full support of SB 1584 and your and your commitment to actualizing a just carceral system in Oregon by providing a meaningful response when there has been a miscarriage of justice.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Solomon", is written over the typed name below.

Paul Solomon, Executive Director, Sponsors Inc.