

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

My name is Karuna Thompson, I have been a prison chaplain for over twenty years employed by the ODOC and a Restorative Justice practitioner for nearly thirty. I am a founding member of the Northwest Justice Forum, ODOC Facilitated Dialog and the RJ Men's Group at Oregon State Penitentiary. My doctoral research focused on alternative approaches to crime, society, and justice. I am also a survivor of various crimes, one of which you have heard about today, the murder of Arnie Eggsman, Alethea Barlow is a very close family member. It was this loss, and the traumatic interactions with the legal system post loss, that inspired me to create Crime Victims and Survivors for Transformation. It is representing that initiative that I address you today. Most recently I completed an appointment with Governor Brown as her Victim Impact Liaison.

Central to my work in prison, the community and with victims, and personally, has been healing trauma and caring for the wounds of traumatic grief. Reckoning with all aspects of "truth" and integration of lived experiences, is essential to recovering from violence and traumatic loss no matter if you are the harmed or the harmer. Systemically we designate offender and victim, and while this allows for legal machinations to function properly it does nothing to mend the interpersonal harms to individuals and communities. The processes protected by the confidentiality will allow survivors to ask questions and have choice that is critical to our recovery and for those of us who have caused the harm to candidly answer questions without fear of repercussions and to begin our journey of personal understanding and transformation; central to which is coming to terms with who we are and the things we have done.

We have all been hurt and we have all caused harm at different points in our lives. The best of these situations provided pathways back to healthy connection with those who we harmed and/or those who harmed us. The worst of these moments, that offer no way to recovery or meaning making, leave us isolated, frustrated and in pain. Please help us to offer meaningful pathways back to community and connection for all of us, making our communities safer and our lives fuller.

Please grant this protection to the emerging programs so they can grow and establish themselves as resources to heal the harms of violence in our community.

Thank you.