



**Submitted to the Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways and Means on  
February 14, 2023**

**Testimony in Support of SB 5505  
By Andy Ko, Executive Director, Partnership for Safety & Justice**

Co-Chair Sollman, Co-Chair Evans and Members of the Subcommittee,

For the record, my name is Andy Ko and I am the Executive Director of Partnership for Safety & Justice. At Partnership for Safety & Justice, we advocate for public safety and criminal justice policies that ensure accountability, equity, and healing for people convicted of crime, crime survivors, and the families and communities of both. For over 20 years, our work has promoted community and public safety with policies that reduce our reliance on the corrections system, keep families together, reduce racial disparities, and invest in communities across Oregon.

Partnership for Safety and Justice strongly supports Senate Bill 5505 and full funding of the Criminal Justice Commission, particularly the budget for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative and the Restorative Justice Program funding.

Justice Reinvestment Initiative is a program that over the last 10 years, has prevented the need for a new prison and invested hundreds of millions of savings in local services in all of Oregon's 36 counties. PSJ supported the program's creation in 2013 and we have remained active in supporting its continued funding.

Our support has included ensuring that JRI continues to be held to high standards for how state dollars are used. We conceived and drafted the Justice Reinvestment Accountability and Equity Act in 2019 to assess the program, analyzing JRI from a racial justice perspective. The subsequent report found that JRI dollars were not reaching culturally specific services around the state, and therefore not serving communities of color and other historically marginalized communities. In 2022, PSJ along with the Transforming Justice coalition successfully advocated for \$10 million to create the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program to help strengthen JRI overall.

To continue this important work, PSJ strongly supports the \$61.9 million allocated to CJC for JRI in the Governor's budget. Our organization will continue to be active in JRIs continued success by ensuring it remains accountable to the goals of reducing prison usage and ensuring safe communities.

In 2021, PSJ also supported a Governor's Racial Justice Council request for funding for a Restorative Justice grant program to be run through the CJC. Restorative Justice is a concept that centers victims in creating the outcomes that work best for them when harm is caused. We are thrilled to see this program funded in Oregon and support the \$4 million allocated in the



Governor's budget. We would further support an additional \$2 million to allow expansion and cost of living increases.

The Justice Reinvestment and Restorative Justice grant programs should remain foundational programs of Oregon's criminal justice approach, and PSJ strongly supports their continued funding.

In the course of our work, we deeply value and rely on the expertise of the staff and director of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission. The data and analysis that they provide regarding criminal justice and public safety are essential to sound, fact-driven policymaking at the state, county, and local levels. For these reasons and others, Partnership for Safety and Justice supports SB 5505.