

February 16, 2023

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

I write to indicate support for continued funding of the Restorative Justice Grant Program. In 2021 HB 2204 infused much-needed resources into an already flourishing RJ movement in Oregon. The initial activities of the grant recipients has laid an important foundation for this work. We need to continue building the house.

I am a member of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon (RJCO), and served as a member of the RJCO Coordinating Committee for several years. Our master's program partners with community dispute resolution centers, government entities, and others to train graduate students in restorative justice philosophy and facilitation methods for application in a wide array of contexts. Our students engage in internships which include direct service, program evaluation and design, research, curriculum development, and a host of other activities. Many of our students have had the opportunity to serve recipients of this program while furthering their professional skills. Graduates of our program go on to lead community and government-based dispute resolution centers, to train new practitioners, and to develop and support new innovations like the projects started under this grant program.

Restorative justice offers healing to victims of crime, accountability for those who cause harm, and an opportunity for healing within the community. The evidence base supporting efficacy for these types of programs is established. This program provides an opportunity for continued refinement and study of the innovations that work best. Long term investment will allow for true transformation of our justice system, benefitting citizens of Oregon and beyond for years to come.

Sincerely,



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