



**PARTNERSHIP FOR  
SAFETY & JUSTICE**

**Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education**

**March 28, 2023**

**Testimony in Support of SB 517**

**By Shannon Wight, Deputy Director, Partnership for Safety & Justice**

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the committee,

My name is Shannon Wight and I am the Deputy Director of Partnership for Safety and Justice. For over 20 years, Partnership for Safety & Justice has been advocating 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.

Since 2020, PSJ has convened the Transforming Justice Coalition to more intentionally center the voices of those most directly impacted by the justice system in creating and advocating for public safety policies.

Partnership for Safety & Justice believes strongly that Oregonians who have been convicted of crimes should have the opportunity to receive professional licensure, especially when their crime has no relation to the career path they are hoping to enter. For too long, such barriers have prevented Oregonians from being able to rebuild their lives post-incarceration.

Stable employment is a key factor in long term success for people with conviction histories. These jobs can generate income that lead to stable housing, stronger families and a sense of pride.

Oregon is safer and more just when everyone has the opportunity to thrive in a job that they love. SB 517 will ensure that unnecessary barriers to achieving important career dreams for people who have been will be removed.

Partnership for Safety & Justice encourages your strong support of SB 517.