

3/30/2023

Testimony by Emerida Echevarria COO of Time Does Not Fit The Crime (TDNFTC)

RE: SB 320 Measure 11 – Requests that people sentenced under Measure 11, for crimes “**other than murder**” *first time offenders* receive an opportunity to receive a sentence reduction **after** completing rehabilitation programs.

In 1994, Oregon voters passed Measure 11 which imposed long mandatory prison terms prohibiting “earned good time” Not taking into consideration each case is uniquely different taking away the power from judges. The public needs to be educated and have a better understanding of this law. Most people convicted of Measure 11 do not get a fair trial in fear they may get a longer sentence, so they are strategically pushed into plea bargains.

People with Measure 11 do not get the opportunity to be in rehabilitation programs that can lead to early release. Many people with “crimes” *other* than Measure 11 convictions currently already have this opportunity to complete these programs and have their sentence reduced. People sentenced under Measure 11 do not have this available to them and they deserve the equal opportunity to demonstrate they have the ability to change their life and be a contributing member of society. How can one demonstrate change when they are not provided with the same equal opportunities?

Now keep in mind SB 320 would *only* apply to all those sentenced under Measure 11 who **actively** participate in rehabilitation programs and have made an effort to create change within themselves and their circumstances. Statistically there are around 5% that actually are released into the communities who have succeeded after Measure 11 incarceration. That is a very low number! We can do better Oregon! Providing good time and opportunities for programs and rehabilitation will increase this number and in return provide positive outcomes within our communities, and tax payers money. This SB 320 would contribute to our state funds being disbursed effectively creating change versus remaining in the same continuous cycle that has historically demonstrated is not effective nor impacting growth within our system.

SB 320 includes those with Measure 11, to have the same **equal and fair opportunity** for rehabilitation to demonstrate good behavior and earn good time as other Adults in custody. SB 320 gives people that little bit of hope and encourages change, which in return impacts our future and communities. People need hope to see the light at the end of their one time wrongful acts and poor choice. Incarcerated or not, this is reality, we all make poor choices one time or another in our lifetime and we all deserve an opportunity to demonstrate change.

We know that no law goes unpunished, we are not asking to take away from the law. All we are asking is to give the same “equal rights” to those convicted under Measure 11 to earn good time, supporting the 14th constitutional amendment which provides the equal rights of the laws. This would include those currently incarcerated, otherwise not considering those currently incarcerated would defeat the purpose of justice equality.

We are not saying people should not have to pay their consequences for what they have done. We know and are aware everyone must pay the consequences of their behavior, which is “why” good behavior should be acknowledged as well. We all deserve a second chance to change our life, I am living proof that change is possible! There are many testimonials that have proven incentives and rehabilitation does work!