

Nathalie Paravicini, ND  
Tigard OR 97223

April 1, 2023,

Re: Support for SB337-1

Chairs Kropf and Prozanski and members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees,

I strongly urge you to support SB337-1, as well as those of SB 413 and HB 2467.

The findings of the 2019 report from the Sixth Amendment Center are jaw dropping. It is completely unacceptable that we continue to provide public defense services in such a dysfunctional manner.

The disproportionate number of low income and BIPOC in the justice system, the rampant latent prejudice and the long term impact on the potential to recover and make a decent living are not fully represented. I am attaching to this testimony a brief excerpt I just happen to read this morning in a literary magazine. The impact of poor representation are huge and not just confined to that moment in time.

*IN COLLEGE I was pulled over for not coming to a complete stop at an intersection. My car was searched, and I was given a ticket for possessing a bud of marijuana the size of a thumbnail.*

*I wanted to fight the citation, but I was told by the county prosecutor that it was only a misdemeanor, no different than a speeding ticket. He lowered the fine, and I paid, naively thinking it would just go away.*

*Soon after that, I graduated and began applying for teaching jobs, but my career was thwarted by that ticket. One principal regretfully told me he had to rescind his offer. At another school I was escorted off the grounds once the background check was completed. I secured a position as a long-term substitute, and I loved my classes, my students, and my department. After a year and a half, however, the district hired a new human-resources director, who changed the policy regarding criminal records. My principal told me he would not be able to hire me back the next year.*

*After losing three jobs due to a pinch of marijuana, I resolved to get my record clean. I paid a lawyer a few thousand dollars and returned to court. This time I actually got to see the judge, who was dismayed that such a small amount of*

*marijuana had plagued me for so long. He promptly expunged the ticket, which allowed me to finally advance my career.*

*I was fortunate that I could hire that lawyer. I know countless others are unable to afford it.*

Therefore, I strongly support the creation of the Oregon Public Defense Commission. We need to move away from fee-based payments to hourly payments, improve the collection of data and ensure quality of services to vulnerable communities.

I also urge you to vote in favor of SB 413 and HB 2467 which would facilitate the transition. A mechanism for adequate funding must also be secured for proper implementation.

The only opposition we see is coming from consortia who would have to modernize their practices. There have been proposals on how to facilitate the transition. Change is never comfortable but the current system is simply not serving justice.

Therefore we urge you to please support SB337-1 as well as SB 413 and HB 2467.

Sincerely



Nathalie Paravicini, ND