

Submitter: Posy Quarterman
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506
TO: Ways & Means Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez, and Members of the
Committee
DATE: May 3, 2023
RE: SUPPORT THE FAMILY PRESERVATION PROJECT/HB 2731

Dear Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez and members of the Committee,

I am a Portland mother, a small business owner of 15+ years, and a volunteer with the Family Preservation Project writing to you asking to please fund the Family Preservation Project/HB 2731. The bill creates in statute and funds the Family Preservation Project (FPP), which mitigates the impacts of parental incarceration on kids in Oregon that have a parent in prison. The program also secures almost a dollar-for-dollar match from private funds AND saves the state at least that much in other costs related to incarcerated moms and their children.

FPP has impacted the lives of thousands of Oregon mothers and children, providing services to help incarcerated women and their children overcome cycles of poverty, trauma, and intergenerational involvement in the criminal justice system.

I support FPP, because as a volunteer with the program in 2018-2019 I witnessed first-hand the impact the programs has on families and the communities they live within. FPP interrupts the cycle of intergenerational criminal justice involvement, poverty and addiction and helps decrease risk of recidivism. Children of incarcerated parents are more likely to be incarcerated, and that number climbs when it is mom that is incarcerated. FPP breaks this cycle, and it does so in a way other programs do not. FPP is a 360 program, address not just the immediate needs of incarcerated mothers and their children, but also helping relieve the long term effects of incarceration on the community by addressing issues like mental health, social behavior, and education.

There are many associated costs to the state when we do not intervene for infants born to mothers in custody or for children of incarcerated parents. There are no established safety nets to catch this often invisible, but growing population of children in our state. As a society we must do better. FPP already is..

Funding FPP helps to actualize the Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents. It is critical that we as a community and as a state recognize the needs and prioritize the rights of children of incarcerated parents from the time of their parent's arrest

through incarceration. We must do better.

Funding FPP ensures fewer children are placed in foster care, incarcerated moms are less likely to go back to prison, and children of participants are exhibiting successful outcomes academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally.

Thank you for your leadership and for your commitment to Oregon. Please support HB 2731 so that these critical supports and services do not go away.

Sincerely,

Posy Quarterman

Posy Quarterman Photography