

May 3, 2023

Senator Elizabeth Steiner, Co-Chair
Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways & Means
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SUPPORT THE FAMILY PRESERVATION PROJECT/HB 2731

Dear Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez & Members of the Committee,

Please fund the Family Preservation Project/HB 2731.

I support FPP, because I am a child who received services from FPP and it directly impacted my life and my relationship with my mother. **I am living proof that comprehensive individualized programming specific to children with a parent behind bars allows for relationship repair and a focus on the future.**

I am a student-athlete at Oregon State University, having earned a full-ride scholarship to play football for the Beavers. In addition to my athletic accomplishments, I am currently on the OSU's Honor Roll, majoring in Business. I am focused on getting a 4.0 and graduating this winter, and by this time next year I will be going to the NFL. I am a committed son, grandson, brother and nephew. I have not let hardships or set-backs of my parent's incarceration define who I am. I have come out the other side of adversity with a strong determination to be a part of the solution. I draw on the wisdom of my lived experience every day.

I was instrumental in making Oregon the first state to create a Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents in statute in 2017. I am currently building capacity and cultivating leadership to develop a Children of Incarcerated Parents Youth Advisory Committee with the Family Preservation Project. I am committed to ensuring that the voices and experiences of young people who have been directly impacted by parental incarceration, are at the center of these conversations. I am committed to seeing that the rights become realities for impacted children, and that their road is made easier by those who have come before them.

FPP helps to actualize the Bill of Rights and 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 other kids get the same support I did.

Sincerely,

Marco Brewer
Corvallis, OR