

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,

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 everything this program did for me and for the bigger picture. This program really has the kids at the focus point and what they need. My mom served 4 years in prison and if it wasn't for FPP I would have had to go through that whole time feeling alone and even more confused. Because of FPP I didn't have to feel alone anymore, I had a family, I had my mom, and I had other kids going through the same thing I was. I want to fight for this program because I know how important it was to me and my family. I want to share the love and show kids that it's possible to get through this and we are stronger together. My mom built a village for me when she was in prison, she knew what I needed and made sure she did her best for me even though she wasn't home with me. Please support FPP and all those it serves.

- Lastly, 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,

Roxanna Frias (16yrs)
Salem, OR

