

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 all it has done for me. My mom was gone for 4 years and the first year she was gone I really didn't have anything to remember her by. It wasn't until FPP that I remembered seeing her and playing with her. I looked forward to our visits and holidays were always fun. I don't think I would have the connection I do today with my mom if it wasn't for FPP. This program helps kids stay connected to their moms and I know how important that is. I will never feel alone again because I know I have my mom and FPP family. FPP is family, it's magical in my eyes. Please support FPP and the many kids and families who depend on this program to be together through very difficult times.

- 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,

Sophia Frias (13yrs)
Salem, OR