



This testimony is on behalf of the Multnomah Democrats' Criminal Justice Study Group. We strongly support HB2535, and here is why:

The policy of Department of Corrections should be to ensure the safety and healthcare of both personnel and prisoners, and to treat prisoners with respect. It is unfortunate that some women are pregnant when they enter prison, then give birth, and must recover postpartum as a new mother while incarcerated. This difficult situation should not be compounded by cruel or disrespectful treatment. That is why we agree with the opportunities and the prohibitions contained in HB2535.

Persons giving birth should have a doula (helper) both during birth and afterward. Persons giving birth should never be shackled. They should not be restrained from appropriately caring for their newborn. They should receive adequate and appropriate recovery care. They should not be subjected to inappropriate intrusive searches, and should be subjected to certain searches only by health professionals.

Regardless of what has or has not been happening at Coffee Creek regarding prisoners giving birth, we want to be sure the rules addressed in HB2535 are codified in law so that every childbearing prisoner is treated justly and with respect, and all personnel will understand what that means.