



February 6, 2024

House Committee on Judiciary
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Wallen and Andersen, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Beaverton, I am writing today in support of HB 4001 and to encourage the committee to include municipal specialty courts in the make-up and scope of the proposed task force.

The City of Beaverton operates a municipal court with over 1,500 criminal cases filed each year. Over the last decade, the City has proudly supported and funded two specialty courts. One focuses on substance abuse and DUII called B-SOBR and the other focuses on behavioral health.

Every year, municipal courts reduce state circuit court misdemeanor caseloads by diverting thousands of criminal cases away from state circuit courts to municipal courts. This saves state general fund dollars by reducing state court appointed attorney expenses, court staff and operation costs. Additionally, municipal courts allocate a portion of the fines they collect to the State, depositing funds into the state's general fund.

To that end, municipal courts provide a service to the overall state's criminal justice system, consistently improving ways we can reduce recidivism and promote recovery of city residents. Our work often goes unnoticed by the Legislature when task forces are established, funding is distributed, and data is collected.

HB 4001 recognizes that specialty courts are an important tool the justice system uses to address addiction and mental health needs of defendants. As currently drafted, HB 4001 does not include input from municipal courts who have specialty courts. If the task force determines statewide metrics or standards, working collaboratively with *all* courts in the State who are doing this important work will make the task force recommendations more effective and improve consistency in the delivery of court services to our most vulnerable Oregonians.

Finally, I urge caution around directing changes to the specialty court eligibility criteria "high needs" without a thorough review of the extensive research and literature published by AllRise, formerly NADCP, the nationally recognized specialty court experts.

I encourage the committee to revise HB 4001 to ensure a comprehensive consideration of Specialty Courts in HB 4001 by including municipal courts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliet Britton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Juliet Britton, Presiding Judge
City of Beaverton Municipal Court