

March 24, 2025

Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Subcommittee On Public Safety
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 5041 - Regarding Oregon Youth Authority and Juvenile Crime Prevention Basic Services and Diversion Funds

Co-Chair Broadman, Co-Chair Evans, and Members of the Committee,

I'd like to thank the Committee for your support of the Oregon Youth Authority and the programs funded at the County level. Multnomah County Department of Community Justice (DCJ) supports HB 5041 because the support addresses the critical need for comprehensive services to support the highest-risk and highest-need youth and families to reduce juvenile delinquency through the Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) Basic Services and Diversion funds and Multnomah County Gang Prevention Services.

The JCP Basic and Diversion funds provide juvenile justice services and sanctions at the local level and aim to divert youth from Oregon Youth Authority close custody. By investing in funding for the JCP program provided by this bill, Multnomah County can sustain its current slate of prevention and intervention programs. These programs provide tailored services for high-risk, high-need, youth and their families, empowering them with the tools and resources necessary to make positive life choices to divert them from moving further into the juvenile justice system.

In Multnomah County, the JCP Basic Services and Diversion funds programs that have a tangible impact on youth and families. The Community Healing Initiative (CHI) for youth on probation, aims to prevent medium and high risk youth of color from committing new crimes and penetrating further into the justice system. In 2024, families that participated came forward during public hearings in front of the Multnomah County Board to voice their strong support for this program, uplifting the transformative wraparound support they received as they navigated the juvenile justice system through the program. During the 2023 - 2024 calendar year CHI Probation served over 110 youth, 94 within the Juvenile Services Division supervision (89% male and 11% female, 47% Black, 30% Latino(a), 15% Caucasian), participated in the program showing the following results: 77% remained law abiding while in CHI and 77% received no new referrals within the 1-year recidivism window.

Additional funding support through JCP for DCJ's Juvenile Probation program offers treatment services for youth with substance abuse and mental health disorders, specialized support for females in detention, and juvenile sex offense supervision support. Additionally, in our Juvenile Detention program, pro-social support and supervision services are available to youth with the support of JCP funded Juvenile Custody Services Specialists.

The Multnomah County Gang Prevention Services funds support programs in our Juvenile Probation program, including culturally specific support for high risk youth and their families. The program uses a trauma-informed approach to hold youth accountable through specialized supervision and sanctions, restorative opportunities, skill building, mentoring, and positive developmentally appropriate activities. Juvenile Field Probation includes in-house restorative groups facilitated by staff. One such group is the HEAT for youth curriculum.

Gang Prevention funds also support two programs that fall within the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). Community Monitoring Program (CMP), is one alternative to detention utilized by DCJ Juvenile Services that permits some at-risk youth who would otherwise be housed in detention to remain in the community. In 2024, nearly 150 youth were supervised through CMP, supporting justice involved youth to remain part of the community, attending school and integrating in public life. Shelter care is another alternative to detention that offers at-risk youth who would otherwise be placed in costly detention beds an opportunity to remain safely in the community under a high level of structure and supervision by professional shelter care providers. In 2024, Oregon had a rate of 19.9 unsheltered homeless children per 10,000 children. Oregon also has the highest rate of unsheltered homeless families in the country. According to McKinney- Vento data, in 2021- 2022, 1.9% of all enrolled K-12 students in Multnomah County experienced homelessness, approximately 1,200 total. In 2024, nearly 20 youth were provided shelter through this program.

In FY 2024, Multnomah County's Juvenile Services Division provided services to 405 youth on probation and over 378 youth in detention. In February 2025, Multnomah County's Local Public Safety Coordinating Council approved the 2025 - 2027 Juvenile Crime Prevention Plan, emphasizing their support for these critical services. Sustaining support for programs such as this is imperative to our community's overall safety and well-being in line with the Department of Community Justice's vision, *Community Safety through Positive Change*.

Thank you for considering our support for HB 5041. We believe that this funding is an investment in the future of our community. By reinforcing our commitment to at-risk youth through enhanced services and programs, we establish a foundation for stronger, safer neighborhoods and a brighter future for the youth of Multnomah County, and Oregon. We respectfully request your support for HB 5041.

Sincerely,

Ansley Flores
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Multnomah County Department of Community Justice

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