



Submitted to the Senate Judiciary Committee

February 4, 2025

Testimony in Opposition to SB 1583

By: Shannon Wight, Deputy Director of Partnership for Safety and Justice

Co-Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to SB 1583.

PSJ advocates for public safety policies that ensure accountability, equity, and healing for people convicted of crime, crime survivors, and the families and communities of both. For over 25 years, our work has promoted community and public safety with policies that keep families together, reduce racial disparities, and invest in communities across Oregon.

Our organization has worked with the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) and the agency's directors for many years. They are experts in data collection and analysis, management of complex criminal justice programs, and transparent reporting on critical initiatives. It is no surprise that this agency has earned the respect of legislators and advocates.

CJC's mission, as stated on their website, is: To improve the legitimacy, efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system. These funds, which are intended to meet the needs of people suffering from substance use disorders, do not fall in these parameters and would shift the focus on the fund to the criminal justice system - the exact opposite of the intent for which it was created.

As we can see by the high rates of people with substance use disorder in our prisons, we have for too long relied on our justice system to address substance use disorders. The investment in substance use disorder treatment was a huge step in a much needed direction, SB 1583 would take us in a direction that we know will not work to actually help people thrive.

The information provided by the proponents of SB 1583 during the informational hearing on Monday showed a steep decline in overdose deaths in Oregon and across the nation. While administration of the funds might be improved, now is not the time to change the nature or purpose of these critical investments.

We would urge the committee to keep the grantmaking responsibility for these funds within OHA and continue to prioritize the treatment services that are so deeply needed across Oregon.

PSJ urges your opposition to SB 1583, and thank you for your consideration.