

Submitter:

Carrie Matsushita

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1516

I am testifying in support of SB 1516A because it addresses a real and growing public safety gap in Oregon's pretrial system. In recent years, communities across the state, including here in Eugene, have experienced organized, repeat property crimes carried out by individuals who have strong incentives and demonstrated ability to flee the jurisdiction before trial. In our case here in Eugene, perpetrators (except one person) did just that. When courts lack clear authority to consider flight risk and danger to the community, defendants are released under conditions that do not realistically ensure their appearance, undermining accountability and public confidence in the justice system. The flight of these perpetrators after posting bail did nothing to alleviate the fear and lack of confidence in our laws to protect its citizens, whose loss is immeasurable.

SB 1516A does not mandate detention or roll back due process protections. Instead, it restores balanced, individualized decision-making by allowing judges to consider concrete risk factors—such as prior failures to appear, multi-jurisdictional activity, and organized criminal conduct—when determining pretrial release. Public safety depends not only on fair treatment of defendants, but on a system that can ensure people charged with serious and repeat offenses are actually present to face trial. SB 1516A strengthens that balance and helps ensure that our justice system can function as intended.