Testimony of Danielle Tudor for Crime Victims United - March 9th, 2015

Bills #HB3036 and #HB3436

House Judiciary Committee

Chair (Representative) Barker

Vice-Chairs, (Representative) Olson and (Representative) Williamson

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Danielle Tudor and I am here today to represent Crime Victims United, and to show my support for both HB 3036 and HB 3436. I would like to thank the committee members for allowing me to speak today on behalf of these bills.

I had the privilege of being a member of this work group, representing victims' interests over the past two years as this legislation was drawn up.

House Bill 3036 allows the Oregon State Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision to mandate or compel a member of the District Attorney's office or the office of the Attorney General to attend, by means of various options, a parole hearing under certain circumstances.

As a victim of a violent crime, I attend parole hearings every two years to keep my dangerous offender in prison. At each parole hearing, I have been very fortunate in having had a District Attorney appear to present to the Oregon State Board of Parole the facts of a very complicated case. I never would want to attend a parole hearing without that additional support. At any parole hearing, I expect to testify only about the damage inflicted on my life by my offender. I cannot imagine having to provide details of the original investigation and trial in my case. Neither I nor any other victim who attends a parole hearing should be obliged to do so. And I believe the information regarding the offender provided by the DA or Attorney General is information that the parole board needs to have at their disposal as they make a parole decision.

House Bill 3436 is an omnibus bill and I will address only one aspect of it directly. Page 2, Section 5 (2) (a):

It requires the Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision to specify in writing the reasons for the decision reached regarding parole or the denial of parole of an inmate.

I believe this is a step in the right direction to bring more transparency to the parole board and their decision making process. The case of Richard Troy Gillmore, Portland's Jogger Rapist, is a prime example of why this needs to happen. In 2007, the parole board voted in favor of parole

for this inmate twice, against the recommendation of a psychologist who rated his recidivism potential as high as 76 percent. There was no way to understand how the parole board came to this conclusion; members provided only a boilerplate statement for release.

At Gillmore's 2012 parole hearing we had a vote of two to one. Two members voted to defer another hearing for five years. A third member voted in favor of release. Two completely opposite decisions – and yet the board gave no reasons to clarify them.

Under this new rule in HB 3436, the parole board members would state, in writing, what criteria they used to come to their individual decisions.

I believe that every voting member on a parole board has a duty to inform the public what measurements or criteria were used to arrive at the very important decision to release - a decision that affects public safety.

I think this new policy of transparency will hold every member to a higher standard and level of responsibility that previous parole boards have lacked.