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1972 - 2015

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3380 Submitted to the House Committee on Judiciary April 5, 2017

Dear Chair Barker and members of the committee,

I have been an attorney for almost 15 years. I was a Pro-Tem judge for almost 10 years and presided frequently over drug courts. I have prosecuted cases. And I have defended all types of individuals charged with a host of crimes.

From my range of perspectives within the criminal justice system, it's clear to me that we need to stop incarcerating drug addicts and non-violent offenders, and we must instead provide people with community-based treatment where they can be united with their families.

Oregon commissioned an audit of the 18,834 Oregon Department of Corrections prisoners who were released between 2008 and 2011. More than 80% of these people were assessed as having medium or high substance abuse treatment needs, yet less than 11% of those people received treatment in prison.

That audit also concluded it costs taxpayers \$84.43 per day to house an inmate. Conversely, it costs only \$11.70 for medium-risk offenders to be placed in a community setting. These costs include probation officers, treatment providers and a whole host of other community supervisors; that's a savings of \$72.73 a day.

"If you want to really control prison costs, you have to go after the causes that put people in prison in the first place," said Dwight Holton, former United States Attorney for Oregon. The money now used to build and operate jails must be shifted to competent probation officers and treatment providers. The debate could then turn to how we spend the significant savings realized by this policy shift.

In the interest of fiscal savings and addressing the drivers of addiction-driven incarceration, I urge you to support HB 3380.

Respectfully,


Brent J. Goodfellow

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