

March 9, 2019

The Honorable Jackie Winters, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Carla Piluso, Co-Chair  
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee:

My name is Danny Rosen and I have been a volunteer at MacLaren for close to five years. My first involvement was through an advisory committee with Janus Youth then shortly becoming a cleared volunteer at MacLaren. I am currently a member of the OYA LGBTQQI Advisory Committee.

I am asking that the committee approve of funding for additional resources to provide improved staffing levels to specifically address underserved youth (youth of color, LGBTQ) by providing increased mental health professionals and service coordinators.

As a retired information technology professional I want to stress the benefits of having quality and reliable data related to service delivery and detailed information about the youth within the OYA system. Improvements in JJIS are needed to provide this level of service.

Over these five years I have facilitated a LGBTQ support group twice monthly within MacLaren. I have seen the impact culturally specific professional development workshops have had with staff and youth interactions. There has been support for LGBTQ community celebrations like a mini PRIDE celebration and observance of National Coming Out Day. This support has been facilitated by the OIIR office. At times staffing coverages have presented challenges for this support and coordination.

The importance of community interaction between OYA youth and the community visitors that are facilitated through these activities cannot be understated. Youth learn of various community LGBTQ organizations that are welcoming and supportive (PFLAG, Cascade AIDS Project, PRIDE NW), are able to see adult role models that have happy and productive lives, and community members gain a new understanding of the youth within the facility. Community members who are at first intimidated by visiting a "prison" and have stereotypes about the youth within OYA are able to create new and healthy perceptions of the youth. Having a specific staff member responsible for LGBTQQI activities would greatly improve consistency across OYA.

Finally, having support within the OYA system and the training on LGBTQ competencies helps address homophobia and transphobia within the facility and encourages straight allies to be supportive of the LGBTQ youth in MacLaren.

Respectfully,

Danni/y Rosen (Danni - preferred name / Danny - legal name)  
MacLaren Volunteer  
Be Your Own Self facilitator  
(pronouns - she/her/hers-he/him/his)