

To: House Committee on Judiciary  
From: Justice Advocates  
Date: March 14, 2019  
Re: Support for HB 3064, Accountability and Equity Act

Chair Jennifer Williamson, Vice-Chairs Chris Gorsek and Sherrie Sprenger, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

Justice Advocates is a grassroots organization in the Portland area focusing on community education on criminal justice reform. We oppose mass incarceration and particularly mandatory minimum sentencing, which is a major cause of excessive incarceration. We were very supportive of previously passed Justice Reinvestment legislation, because one of the best ways to reduce costly prison use and construction is to invest in **crime prevention**. That is a win – win – win – win strategy: fewer individuals commit crimes, children and spouses do not suffer from having a family member incarcerated, communities are safer, and taxpayer funds can be redirected from prisons to other community needs.

Justice Reinvestment is projected to save Oregon nearly \$325 million in prison construction and maintenance costs over 10 years. But it is not enough to have passed this legislation in the past. The program needs to be monitored and updated. There must be oversight about whether counties are successfully utilizing the funds they were allotted for such things as treatment, education, housing, legal services supervision, victims' services, local public safety, and re-entry assistance. Counties that are not using these funds well should be helped to improve, in order to continue receiving these justice reinvestment funds. In addition, we want these justice reinvestment dollars to reach people in often-underserved communities—such as people of color, rural residents, and Native Americans. At least two members of such communities should serve on the Grant Review Committee to help ensure that this focus will occur.

HB 3064, the Accountability and Equity Act, will accomplish all the goals described above, and we members of Justice Advocates urge the members of the House Judiciary Committee to support this important legislation.

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