



April 24, 2019

House Committee on Judiciary

RE: Support of SB 1008

Dear Members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

I am writing in support of SB 1008. The Members of the Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs provide services to over 100,000 children, youth and their families annually across Oregon including youth who have been adjudicated.

Research has shown that adolescents mature at markedly varied rates and that adolescent decision-making is particularly modulated by reward and peer influence. Adolescents' inclination to engage in risky behavior is grounded in developmental neuroscience. They can often recognize risks, but incomplete development of brain mechanisms related to modulation of impulsive behavior reduces their tendency to heed those risks. Adolescents should not be held to the same standard as a fully developed mature adult.

Instead, the Alliance believes that Oregon's youth justice system should focus on rehabilitation, prevention and education. We also believe that we should focus on healing youth, not just punishing them, so they can become productive members of our community.

We must shift to what works. Studies show youth who are placed in the adult justice system are over 30% more likely to commit additional crimes upon release than those in the youth justice system. Placing youth in the justice system is better for the youth and keeps our communities safe.

As a result, we'd like to urge you to support the SB 1008.

Royce Bowlin
Executive Director