



**CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON  
Fifteenth Judicial District**

Megan L. Jacquot  
Judge

Coos County Courthouse  
Coquille, OR 97423  
541-396-4115

Testimony of Megan L. Jacquot, Circuit Court Judge, Coos County  
In Support of SB 924  
House Committee on Judiciary  
May 6, 2019

Hon. Chair Williamson and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee this morning. I am the primary juvenile judge in Coos County and spent my career before taking the bench handling all types of juvenile law issues in many trial courts and the Oregon Appellate Courts. My testimony is my own and does not necessarily reflect the position of the Oregon Judicial Department.

I'd like to thank Senator Manning for his commitment to juvenile issues and efforts to clarify some of the juvenile code. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges has recognized that using secure detention for kids who are low risk and do not need it can be harmful to them. In the 2018 version of the Enhanced Juvenile Justice Guidelines, NCJFCJ identifies the need for a continuum of placement resources in each community to match the risk level of the child involved with the least restrictive placement that will meet the needs for child safety and community security.<sup>1</sup> The juvenile court has dual obligations to keep the community safe and care for the children within its jurisdiction. NCJFCJ has passed a resolution to support elimination of the "court order" loophole that allows status offenders and runaways to be detained despite the federal prohibition that has been in effect since 1974. The amendments passed on the Senate side allow an exception to be made for mandatory post-requisition detention of interstate runaways pursuant to the Interstate Commission on Juveniles. In order to address this issue for those kids, the compact will need to be changed according to its own rules. The bill provides for the collection of the data that will be necessary in order to support change at the interstate commission level.

Current Oregon law is confusing, and ORC 419C.145 and ORS 419C.109(d) require multiple cross-references and could lead to erroneous placements of children in detention. Senate Bill 924 clarifies the prohibition on keeping kids who have not committed criminal acts in detention; and makes the juvenile code easier to apply.

We need to devote resources to developing a continuum of placement alternatives, especially in our small communities. I have few options for placement of kids. Our shelter facility closed in late November. We are currently contracting with Douglas County for detention and shelter beds. An

investment in safe local options for teens is necessary, but until we have them detention is not the answer.

I urge your support for Senate Bill 924A and thank the committee for your continued attention to juvenile justice issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Megan L. Jacquot', written in a cursive style.

Megan L. Jacquot

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<sup>i</sup> NCJFCJ Enhanced Juvenile Justice Guidelines, Ed. Jessica Pearce, 2018, Ch III, p. 26-28.