



ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS DIRECTORS

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Value, Offender
Reformation,
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Co-Chairs Gorsek, Sollman and members of the Committee, my name is Eric Guyer and I am the Director of Jackson County Community Justice. Today I am here to represent the Oregon Association of Community Corrections Directors and our support for HB 5004. I also want to echo the support of Assistant Director Stromberg and the Department of Corrections in a call to invest \$25.6 million dollars to the Grant in Aid allocation that funds community corrections. This investment addresses rising personnel costs and the adoption of evidence-based practices that have taken place over the past ten years to include enhanced assessment, case planning and cognitive-behavioral interventions.

Community Corrections in Oregon has been a national model because of the partnership between forward-thinking policy, dedicated practitioners and a community-based approach. That approach is exemplified by SB 267, which in 2003 mandated evidence-based approaches to correctional services for justice-involved Oregonians. It is evident in HB 3194, which in 2013 implemented the Justice Reinvestment Initiative in Oregon and greatly decreased imprisonment, building on community corrections programming to support people locally. And it is clearly at the heart of SB1145, which in 1995 took the radical action of utilizing Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils and investments in counties to ensure local commitment to the way in which justice-involved Oregonians receive services.

I reference these landmark moments in Oregon to illustrate how far our state has come, the local and state partnership that has been at the heart of this progress, and to present how the work itself has evolved even over the past decade. Community Corrections officers uniformly now utilize comprehensive gender responsive risk/needs assessments, our officers engage in collaborative case planning based on assessed risks and needs, and work to build skills with individuals that transform lives and change behaviors associated with recidivism. For many justice-involved Oregonians their work with their Probation Officer is the behavioral health support that is needed in their lives.

This new approach takes more time, and it has required officers to develop new skills. In 2018 the Department of Corrections conducted a comprehensive statewide study which showed that these changes were taking place. New cases, the essential first sixty days that a person receives services, went from receiving 1.13 hours of service per month in 2012, to 2.96 hours of service in 2018; those people who were assessed as high risk went from receiving 1.9



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hours of service to 2.4 hours of service per month. Frontloading service approaches and focusing on those who present the highest risk is a direct application of what has been proven to work best.

Oregon again has an opportunity to lead and transform the way we provide services to justice-involved Oregonians. We have focused our services on those who present the greatest risk, and in so doing have greatly reduced our footprint and shortened the length of time Oregonians spend on supervision. Since 2000, the average length of a probation in Oregon has decreased from 33 to 17 months. Since 2007, Community Corrections has decreased its use of local control jail sanctions by 48%. We have changed service delivery models to become more trauma informed, culturally specific and gender responsive. We intend to assess and improve our system as best practices continue to evolve. We take pride in being a leader in Community Corrections in the nation. Investing in Community Corrections ensures that these changes will continue to provide supports for individuals and safeguards within our communities. It is an investment in evidence-based approaches, it is an investment in people remaining and thriving within their communities and it is an investment in the best value in public safety – community corrections.

For additional information contact: Lara Smith 503-804-9750