



Testimony to the Oregon House Judiciary Committee on HB 2169
Simon Fulford, President of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon

Dear Chair Bynum, Vice-Chairs Noble and Power, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to you as President of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon (RJCO). RJCO is the only state-wide coalition of Oregon restorative justice practitioners and programs. We promote and support the implementation and practice of restorative justice principles and models in Oregon's justice, law enforcement, educational, and other community institutions to help ensure that the needs of crime victims, criminal justice involved individuals, and the community are appropriately met.

RJCO is delighted to see the drafting of HB 2169 and strongly support the greater use of Restorative Justice in criminal justice settings. In fact, we believe that much of our community's efforts to address crime and harm would be better delivered if done so through the use of appropriate Restorative Justice responses, programs and services.

I would like to outline some key areas that we would like to see as part of HB 2169's implementation:

- First and foremost, all Restorative Justice efforts should center racial justice and should both address and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in our criminal justice system;
- We assume that this bill would pass with limited funding for the first two years of any implementation. We recommend using these funds for a small number of pilot projects run over 2-4 years with robust monitoring and impact assessment, particularly around disproportionality, victim satisfaction and recidivism;
- Other than the required administrative overheads of the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), ALL funds should flow through to community based nonprofits who are experts in the delivery of Restorative Justice and NO funds should be allocated or used by County Juvenile Departments, Community Corrections, District Attorney offices and/or other formal government agencies and departments in the law enforcement or criminal justice system. This is essential to ensure an equitable service that is fair, as free from systemic racism or institutional bias as possible and therefor that feels safe and accessible to community members disproportionately impacted by these same systems;
- We request that representatives from the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon, other non-traditional RJ practitioners, impacted communities and victim/survivor communities be mandated to be involved as equal partners in the rule-making process with the CJC, DoJ and/or other relevant bodies;
- While not necessary for how this bill is written, Domestic Violence and/or Intimate Partner Violence can be appropriate for some Restorative Justice responses but we would recommend

any implementation of these approaches be designed with equal input from victim and survivor groups;

- Finally, we strongly recommend that the Restorative Justice programs funded through HB 2169 focus on more serious crimes or felonies where there is an identified victim as the majority of national and international evidence shows RJ to be most effective with more serious offenses.

I and/or representatives of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon would be very happy to answer further questions now or at a later date.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Fulford", with a large, stylized initial "S" and a horizontal line underneath.

Simon Fulford