



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Criminal Justice Commission

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18 March 2021

Ken Sanchagrin
Executive Director

The Honorable Janelle Bynum, Chair
The Honorable Ron Noble, Vice Chair
The Honorable Karin Power, Vice Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

COMMISSIONERS:

Robert Ball, Chairman
Sen. Floyd Prozanski*
Rep. Duane Stark*
Jessica Beach
Rob Bovett
Wally Hicks
Jessica Kampfe
Sebastian Tapia

RE: House Bill 2169-1

*Non-Voting

Dear Chair Bynum and Members of the Committee:

This testimony concerns the dash-1 amendment to House Bill 2169 and specifically focuses on Section 1, which proposes the creation of a grant program to be administered by the Criminal Justice Commission to fund restorative justice programs in the state. The Commission has been administering local public safety focused grants for many years and the purpose of my testimony is to provide additional information regarding the process the Commission undertakes when establishing new grant funding opportunities.

Restorative justice means different things to different people and can be applied to a wide variety of programs. A common thread that runs through these programs is a focus on a collective process through which individuals who commit crimes try to make the world a better place than they left it following the commission of their criminal offense. Many, but not all programs, focus on including diverse voices and viewpoints in the restorative justice process, including the individual who committed the crime, the victim(s), and representatives of the community or other stakeholders impacted by the offense. The variety of programs falling under this definition is wide. According to the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon, there are currently at least twenty specific organizations operating under this basic framework and more can be found in school districts and elsewhere across the state. The services offered by these organizations range from mediation and conflict resolution to reconciliation, restorative restitution payback programs, and victim-offender dialogues, among others.

Given the breadth of restorative justice as a concept as well as the services offered by restorative justice programs, the creation of a grant program of this type presents the Commission with a unique set of challenges and opportunities. To meet these challenges and to leverage the opportunities they present should this legislation pass, the Commission will take the following steps. First, it will be critical to gather information regarding the current landscape of restorative justice offerings in the state of Oregon and to engage with experts and stakeholders to determine the gaps that could most effectively be filled by the funding provided by this grant program. To this end, Commission staff would work closely with the individuals advocating for the creation of this grant from the Criminal Justice Subcommittee of the Racial Justice Council, as well as with current groups offering restorative justice services and restorative justice experts. Simultaneously, Commission staff will also engage with the social scientific literature to explore the quantitative and qualitative evidence regarding the most promising restorative justice program characteristics and offerings to ensure that funding flows to programs adhering to empirically supported best practices. This work will form the foundation of the development



of the administrative rules the Commission will promulgate concerning eligibility and grant application review, along with financial, outcomes, and metrics reporting requirements. It will also help the Commission to determine, using the input as a guide, whether funding should be devoted to building capacity in current programs found in the state, building new capacity, or some combination of the two. Further, the information gathered during this stage will also aid in the development of the request for grant proposals (RFGP) that will be the guiding document for potential applicants.

Second, the Commission will also begin to assemble a grant review committee. For most of its grants, the Commission utilizes committees of individuals with experience administering programs related to the grant in question, so that funding decisions can be made by those who can best determine program needs, reasonable funding requests, and promising practices. Similar to our practice with other grants we administer, the grant review committee would then submit its recommendations to the full Commission for final consideration so that funding decisions can be made.

It is my hope that the testimony contained in this letter provides sufficient context surrounding the initial implementation of the grant program proposed in the dash-1 amendment to House Bill 2169. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if I can provide further information or if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth Sully" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ken Sanchagrin