



April 1, 2021

House Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB 3229**

Chair Bynum, Vice Chair Noble, Vice Chair Power, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3229 on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon (ACLU of Oregon), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing civil liberties and civil rights, with more than 28,415 members statewide.

During the 2019 legislative session, the ACLU of Oregon supported HB 3289A<sup>1</sup>, which directed the Criminal Justice Commission to conduct a study and report back to the legislature on local and regional correctional facilities. The CJC report<sup>2</sup>, released in September of 2020, tracked with many of the frequent complaints we receive from incarcerated persons and their loved ones about jail conditions.

The report outlined nine policy recommendations:

1. Reduce community reliance on jails for management of individuals committing frequent, low level infractions. Increase resources for community services for these individuals.
2. Reform the process by which individuals with serious mental illness or who are experiencing a mental health crisis encounter local correctional facilities. Increase diversion from jail, especially for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Ensure that qualified staff conduct each screening.
3. Ensure Oregon Health Plan (and other insurance coverage) remains intact upon booking, during jail stays, and after reentry.
4. Adopt minimum health care standards for jails.
5. Provide additional resources to recruit and retain medical staff in jails, especially for small and rural jails.
6. Consider jails and prisons as separate entities in all future policy development.
7. Facilitate continuation of treatment upon booking and ensure “warm handoffs” upon reentry.
8. Develop standardized jail inspection process that includes objective inspectors, a randomized inspection schedule, and reports inspection findings to the state.
9. Develop a standardized method and data format for jails to submit data to the Criminal Justice Commission.

While there is significant work to be done to improve jail conditions in Oregon, HB 3229 will be an important first step by convening an advisory council to help establish health care standards for jails across Oregon.

**The ACLU of Oregon urges your support of HB 3229.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2019R1/Measures/Overview/HB3289>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oregon.gov/cjc/CJC%20Document%20Library/HB3289ReportSept2020.pdf>