



Testimony in support of HB 5005  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety  
Submitted by Paul Solomon, Executive Director

February 9, 2021

Co-Chairs Gorsek and Bynum, members of the committee:

I write to you today to support HB 5005 the biannual budget for the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission.

I want to begin by stating that Sponsors supports the overall direction of Oregon's Criminal Justice Commission and specifically the leadership of Director Sanchagrin. In particular, we have been impressed with Director Sanchagrin and the team's ongoing commitment to supporting state officials, various councils and task forces, and local public safety coordinating councils with sound data and research to help aid in identifying issues and the development of solutions to our state's public safety challenges.

Sponsors, Inc., is a national leader in the delivery of Reentry services. We operate 20 buildings on seven sites in Lane County with over 200 units of housing for men and women with criminal histories and ancillary programs. Over the years, we developed strong working relationships with our state and county public safety partners, none more so than Lane County Parole and Probation. We attend trainings together, share office space, and work in concert to assess and address the criminogenic needs of the populations we serve. As a system, Lane County has invested significant Grant in Aid dollars in services provided by Sponsors, including, Transitional Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing (for both men and women), Cognitive Behavioral Therapies, Mental Health Services, Mentoring, and more.

In particular, the Justice Reinvestment Grant Program has had tremendous impact in Lane County, and across the state. As a result of the investments made by Lane County using JRGP funding, we have witnessed a significant reduction in the county's utilization of state prison beds and have continued to make progress in our efforts to reduce recidivism. With the local investments made possible through the JRGP, we have reversed those trends and made critical investments in programs that are holding people accountable without the use of prison, reducing recidivism, and improving the quality of life in our community. The resulting cost avoidance more than warrants fully funding JRGP.

We recognize that the Justice Reinvestment Grant Program is just one of many programs, services, and grants that the Criminal Justice Commission oversees. We appreciate the work of the CJC to continue to support public safety programs and the work they do with stakeholders across Oregon.

Sincerely,

  
Paul Solomon, Executive Director