



Legislative Testimony

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

June 18, 2021

The Honorable Barbara Smith Warner, Chair
House Committee on Rules

Re: Senate Bill 620

Chair Smith Warner and members of the committee, I am Jeremiah Stromberg, Assistant Director of the Community Corrections Division for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am writing in support of the dash-two amendment to Senate Bill (SB) 620.

What the Bill Does:

The dash-two amendments to SB 620 eliminate the collection of supervision fees for individuals serving a period of supervision, whether that be probation, parole, or post-prison.

Background Information:

DOC in collaboration with the counties and community corrections leadership, have sought ways to reduce the use of fees for people on supervision. Fees have been necessary to support critical services provided to individuals in the justice system such as housing, treatment, basic needs, and emergent situations.

Additionally, counties have used wide discretion in determining the appropriate amount to charge: waiving fees as an incentive for compliance, balancing fees against other important costs, and recognizing an individual's own ability to pay.

The time has come to end the reliance on self pay to fund the critical components of supervision. Fees are difficult on those who already struggle financially, and they serve as a reason not to report to their parole officer, to prevent being questioned as to how much they are able to pay today.

DOC supports the end to supervision fee collection, joining a handful of counties around the country who have done this as well, but I believe Oregon to be the first state to end them system wide.

This support requires financial action on the part of the legislature. Community corrections has billed more than \$20 million a biennium in fees while collecting an average of \$10 million. It is our understanding that the resources exist and there is support to approve an allocation of at least \$10 million in the end-of-session appropriation bill, and DOC would ask this committee to support the backfill of this loss of revenue to maintain adequate and appropriate funding for supervision.

Requested Action:

For the reasons explained above, the department respectfully requests your support of the dash-two amendment to SB 620.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Submitted by:

Oregon Department of Corrections

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