



PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFETY & JUSTICE

**Submitted to the Senate Committee on Judiciary
February 19, 2021**

**Testimony in Support of SB 620
By Shannon Wight, Deputy Director, Partnership for Safety & Justice**

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

At Partnership for Safety & Justice, we advocate for public safety and criminal justice policies that ensure accountability, equity, and healing for people convicted of crime, crime survivors, and the families and communities of both. For over 20 years, our work has promoted public safety with policies that keep families together, reduce racial disparities, and invest in communities across Oregon.

We commend Multnomah County for bringing SB 620 and for Senator Frederick's sponsorship to allow counties to opt out of court fees levelled against people convicted of crime. Numerous recent studies have found these fines and fees to be ineffective in raising significant revenue, especially when the amount collected is measured against the cost of collection. Moreover, they create barriers to people succeeding on supervision,¹ which hinders public safety.

Partnership for Safety and Justice supports SB 620, and we also understand that for some jurisdictions losing these fees could impact court operations. The state should make up for actual lost revenue to help fill this gap.

Saddling people convicted of crime with fines and fees they may never be able to pay does not further their economic independence and financial stability. SB 620 aligns with other legislation related to fines and fees that are being proposed this session, including SB 422 which eliminates juvenile fines and fees and HB 2002 which, among other reforms, eliminates supervision fees for adults. Together, they reflect Oregon's interest in the success of people who have been convicted of crime.

We urge your support for SB 620.

¹ <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/steep-costs-criminal-justice-fees-and-fines>,
<http://rightoncrime.com/2019/05/confronting-the-burden-of-fines-and-fees-on-fine-only-offenses-in-texas-recent-reforms-and-next-steps/>