



February 1, 2021

Honorable Senator Floyd Prozanski
Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for SB 422 (Manning) – End Juvenile Administrative Fees in Oregon

Dear Senator Prozanski,

The Fines and Fees Justice Center supports the passage of Senate Bill 422 (Manning) to end the imposition of fees on families with youth in Oregon's juvenile delinquency system. These monetary sanctions sabotage the juvenile justice system's rehabilitative goals by undermining the financial and psychological well-being of youth and their families. Research also demonstrates that fees significantly increase the likelihood of recidivism and prolong juvenile system involvement. The harsh penalties Oregon imposes on families and youth who cannot afford to pay their juvenile fees compound these harms.

Juvenile fees also disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous and low-income youth, who are overrepresented at all stages of the juvenile system. For example, Black and Indigenous youth are three times more likely than White youth to be committed to the Oregon Youth Authority. That alone contributes to disproportionately higher fees imposed on Black and Indigenous youth.

Despite the significant and racially disparate harm they impose on youth and their families, juvenile fees generate little or no net revenue for counties, courts, or the state. Revenue from fees is declining while collection costs are increasing. In some cases, because families cannot afford to pay the fees imposed, the cost of collection exceeds the revenue collected.

Across the country state and local jurisdictions are recognizing that juvenile fees are counterproductive and profoundly harmful and have eliminated them. Oregon should join California, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey and New York and end the imposition of fees in the juvenile justice system.

The Fines and Fees Justice Center urges you and your colleagues to vote yes on SB 422.

Sincerely,

Joanna Weiss, Co-Director
Lisa Foster, Co-Director

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