



Oregon moms and caregivers fighting for gender, economic, and racial justice.

February 3, 2022

Senate Judiciary & Ballot Measure 110 Implementation Committee
RE: Support for SB 1510

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 1510. Family Forward Oregon strongly supports SB 1510 to improve public safety in Oregon and transform our criminal justice system. Our organization focuses on strengthening the economic security of mothers, caregivers, parents, and families through bold policies. As members of the Fair Shot For All Coalition we support this bill as part of our ongoing work towards achieving racial and gender justice in Oregon.

Every Oregonian deserves to feel safe and be treated with dignity. But many of us, especially Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other people of color, feel vulnerable and unprotected in our own communities, homes, and workplaces.

Women and mothers in particular, are entering the criminal justice system in increasing numbers due to the effects of gender-based discrimination, poverty, trauma, abuse and institutional racism. According to an article by the Statesman Journal, the number of women imprisoned in Oregon has nearly tripled over the past 20 years, even though women are not committing more frequent or more serious crimes.¹ Racial disparities are clear among justice-involved women—In 2016, the U.S imprisonment rate for Black women was twice that of white women, and the imprisonment rate for Latinx women was 1.4 times that of white women.²

The deep trauma of living in a culture of white supremacy and systemic racism has created widespread harm that impacts all of us. We can start to urgently address this issue with the passage of SB 1510. Transforming Justice (SB 1510) will:

¹<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/crime/2017/02/16/oregon-faces-skyrocketing-female-prison-population/98012786/>

² <http://www.herstoryoregon.org/increasing-incarceration-rates>

- Reduce racial disparities in traffic stops by making a broken headlight, taillight, brake light, or license plate light a “secondary offense,” meaning that an officer can issue a citation only if a driver is pulled over for something else.
- Improve success for people on probation and parole with a rulemaking process that can prevent, in some instances, parole and probation officers from visiting the people they supervise at work. The rules will also cover when certain people on supervision can report remotely.
- Create the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program to fund services that promote racial equity, address racial disparities prevalent in Oregon’s criminal justice system, and reduce prison use.

Each time we lock someone up, we also sentence their family members and children to traumatic separation and financial hardship. Over 68,000 children in Oregon have had an incarcerated parent in their lifetime and 80% of women who are incarcerated are mothers.

Please support SB 1510 and enact these critically needed changes that are aligned with Oregonians’ vision for a public safety system rooted in racial equity, accountability, healing, and opportunity..

Together, we can make Oregon a place where we all have a fair shot and feel safe. We urge your YES vote on SB 1510

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Courtney Helstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Courtney Helstein
Political Director
Family Forward Oregon

