



METROPOLITAN PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES, INC.

February 1, 2022

To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Carl Macpherson, Executive Director, Metropolitan Public Defender

Re: **Support for HB 4120**

Dear Chair Bynum, Vice Chairs Noble and Power, and Members of the Committee:

Metropolitan Public Defender (MPD), a 501(c)(3) non-profit law firm, is the largest trial-level public defense service provider in Oregon. We have the primary public defense contracts in Multnomah and Washington Counties. As such, our office of more than 180 people provide criminal public defense, and juvenile delinquency and dependency defense, in both counties.

Both the criminal legal system and the juvenile system have significant economic collateral consequences on people. Imposition of fees and fines, particularly on people who do not have the ability to pay them, interferes with their success in our communities. Economic penalties can result in long-lasting collateral consequences for our clients. MPD supports HB 4120 because it is a positive step forward in reducing the financial burden of the criminal and juvenile legal systems.

The Bill also works to increase access to justice through the continued use of remote court appearances. As we have learned throughout the pandemic, there are some court appearances that can be effectively conducted remotely. The use of remote court appearances not only helps people stay safe, but it can allow for more efficient use of time for those involved.

MPD supports HB 4120 because the Bill considers ability to pay prior to imposition of fines and fees, and allows for flexibility in the use of remote court appearances.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carl Macpherson

Carl Macpherson
Executive Director