



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 103-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

January 31, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senator Floyd Prozanski, Chair

Re: [SB 529](#) – Relating to alternative incarceration programs – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the goals of SB 529—to modify current law to codify the effectiveness of structured, alternative incarceration programs for those suffering from addiction disorders. We base our testimony on our adult corrections position, which supports alternatives at all stages of the criminal justice process, including treatment centers for substance abuse.

We concur with the language in the bill that requires the Department of Correction (DOC) to establish intensive alternative incarceration programs that “address addiction as a chronic disease, recognizing that participants have individualized needs and different recovery progressions” and includes a range of treatment options, including peer mentoring, educational and vocational services, and self-help groups. We are pleased to see that the requirement for participants to engage in “intensive mental and physical training” will be removed from the statute, as this may not be of benefit to all. We also approve of the changes to acceptance procedures that include offender consent and a signed agreement statement.

An important consideration is the intersectionality of substance abuse, mental illness, criminal behavior, and homelessness in our society. To avoid a siloed approach, we urge DOC to coordinate with the Oregon Health Authority and the many nonprofits who work with substance abusers. As we all know, substance abuse is a chronic, complex illness with wide-ranging impacts to families and communities. This is why we have long supported community-based wrap-around programs that connect to local resources and can offer both individual and family support. However, programs at all levels can only be effective when they are adequately funded, use evidence-based treatments, and are staffed with qualified health care professionals, drug treatment counselors, and other trained staff.

The League urges passage of SB 529, and we thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this legislation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Becky Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marge Easley".

Marge Easley
LWVOR Action Committee