

10 Feb 2023

Dear Senator Prozanski and the Judiciary Committee,

My name is James Barber and I work in Wasco County, Oregon. I am writing to express my support for SB586 as a necessary expansion of pre-existing confidentiality statutes. In 2021, the legislature took an important step by investing in restorative justice and its use as an alternative to prosecution. Common stages in restorative justice processes include preparation, facilitated dialogue, and repair. There are many benefits to these processes, stemming particularly from the ability of dialogue to find and address the core issues causing harm.

Confidentiality is an integral part of the process, allowing for open and honest communication between all parties. Similar facilitated dialogue programs run by DOC, OYA, and the PSRB are also protected by confidentiality statutes. This shows the need for a provision for the new restorative justice programs like ours too. I strongly urge you to consider the importance of SB586 in strengthening these developing programs, which have great potential to improve public safety, reduce the state's reliance on incarceration, and provide healing for crime survivors.

I care about Oregon continuing to support these programs because restorative justice...

- provides victims and survivors with a valuable option for healing and accountability.
- benefits everyone involved: the survivor, the person responsible for the harm, and the broader community.
- empowers people to acknowledge, take responsibility for and work towards repairing the harm they caused.
- demonstrates high levels of success related to increased survivor satisfaction rates, lowered recidivism rates, and lowered costs when compared to criminal justice responses, according to data from programs across America and the globe.

*[Restorative justice is practiced in many counties across Oregon, including Clackamas, Deschutes, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Lincoln, Multnomah, Polk, Wasco, and Washington. Several tribes have peacemaking courts that incorporate similar practices.]*

As a resident of Oregon, it is important to me that my community has the opportunity to experience the full benefits of restorative justice.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
//SIGNED  
James Barber