

Submitter: Tracy Adevai
On Behalf Of: Colliding Rivers Counseling Services
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB586

Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the Committee, my name is Tracy Adevai, and I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker currently working at the Springfield Municipal Jail as jail mental health and in private practice in Roseburg, Oregon for adjudicated and mandated adults. Over the last eight and a half years I have worked as jail mental health in five different county jails in Oregon. In addition to this for the past twelve and a half years I've also been a facilitator for the Oregon Department of Corrections' Facilitated Dialogue Program for victim/survivors of violent crimes and the offenders who have committed those crimes. I also co-facilitated a restorative justice group inside the Oregon State Correctional Institution for 5 years. I have a master's in social work and a master's in conflict and dispute resolution w/ a focus on mediation and restorative justice. And I say all this and highlight both of my backgrounds, because there is an essential component that all of my work shares that aids in true growth, healing, and greater success for all...and that is confidentiality.

When you go see a counselor you're afforded some room to dig deep and speak some truths, because you know it is protected space. And I'm here today to talk about why it's crucial for Senate Bill 586 to be implemented into law to provide that same protected space for restorative justice dialogues. This is already standard protocol for the Oregon Department of Corrections' Facilitated Dialogue Program, and, without it, neither party would feel secure to say or ask things that need to be brought to light...true depths and healing would not happen without this protection. The dialogues happening through the Oregon Department of Corrections could never be the intimate powerhouses that they are without that confidentiality piece. It is only within these strict guidelines that real truth and healing can come to fruition.

And we know that restorative justice programs are crucial to our communities. This is how we can help others find meaning, foster resiliency, and aid in the healing process. And this is also how those that have committed a crime can come to understand the true impacts of their actions on others and their community and are afforded the opportunity to expand their empathy. And when we're expanding people's capacity for empathy...when we're helping them put themselves into another's shoes to truly understand the impact of their actions then they are less likely to reoffend and cause further harm.

So if we have less people reoffending and more people healing then ultimately it decreases the financial hardship on two of our most struggling and broken systems...our criminal justice system and our mental health system.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to talk about how important and impactful this work continues to be for all of Oregon, so thank you for your time today.