

NANCY CAMPBELL MEAD

Senior Judge

February 23, 2023

To: Representative Jason Kroph, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

Re: HB 2731 – Establishment of Family Preservation Project Pilot Program – **Support**

Until retirement I was a Circuit Court Judge in Washington County for almost 20 years. I mostly presided over criminal cases, but also covered Juvenile Court for many years. I strongly support the passage of HB 2731 which will provide for the Family Preservation Project (FFP) at Coffee Creek Correctional Institution until 2031. The Family Preservation Project has been in existence since 2010, originally in partnership with Portland Community College, and more recently with the YWCA of Portland. The Legislature failed to renew its funding of this Project in 2019; it must not fail to fund it in 2022.

The FPP is a highly successful program giving emotional and educational support to children of incarcerated parents, helping to strengthen the bonds between incarcerated mothers and their children, teaching parenting and life skills, and providing the resources to the mothers to assist in a successful transition from prison to the community.

Since the FPP's inception, the mothers and children who have participated in it have fared far better than those who have not had the benefit of the program. The recidivism rate for the mother's is significantly lower than for their counterparts who did not participate, and the children overall do much better than do children of incarcerated parents who have not had the benefit of the FPP.

This program essentially pays for itself by reducing the recidivism rate of its participants, supporting families in ways that reduce the need for foster care, and improving long term the outcomes of child participants.

I strongly urge the passage of HB 2731. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Family Preservation Project.

Respectfully,

Nancy W. Campbell
Senior Judge