



This testimony is on behalf of the Multnomah Democrats' Criminal Justice Study Group. We strongly support HB2731, and here is why:

Nearly 2/3 of the women in Coffee Creek correctional facility are mothers. Regardless of the reason for conviction and incarceration, it can be very unfortunate both for a mother and for the children to be separated by prison.

A program that provides family protections, parent self-belief, parenting skills, reduction of children's trauma, other child services, prevention of children getting into trouble, reentry assistance, and prevention of recidivism is a very worthwhile program. Parenting is complex enough for mothers out in the community; there is a whole other set of issues when mother and children are separated by prison. What goes on during that time can determine success when mothers return to their children after release. It may also determine whether a mother regains custody of their family.

The Family Preservation Project pilot program offered by the Portland YWCA sounds like an excellent plan for achieving success for all. This will be important not only for the mother and children, but also for the community to which that mother returns. That's why we ask you to vote yes on HB2731