

COURTNEY NERON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 26



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Testimony in Support of HB 2731

February 23, 2023

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Wallan, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary,

I write today in support of [HB2731](#) which will give direction and funding, as well as codify goals, services, and reporting requirements for the Family Preservation Project located in Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in the heart of my district.

[The Family Preservation Project](#) is keeping thousands of mothers and their children connected across the barriers of incarceration through holistic services, interventions, educational programs, and building relationships. It is worth our investment. As I speak with the participants of FPP, it is evident that the results of participation are life changing, motivating mothers to build skills, maintain connections with their kids and keep their life moving on a healthy track. I am impressed and grateful for the success stories coming from this work.

[In the last biennium](#) alone, the Family Preservation Project served 315 incarcerated women, 630 children of incarcerated women, and 320 families or caregivers. Without the program, these hundreds of Oregon children with mothers incarcerated at Coffee Creek are less likely to see their mom, more likely to be placed in DHS care, and much more likely to suffer the collateral consequences of incarceration while having done nothing but be a child.

HB 2731 will secure funding streams for multiple biennia in order to provide stability for the service and allow for meaningful analysis of FPP. This program is part of the needed ongoing response to the impact of trauma and incarceration on mothers and their children. The Family Preservation Project [has changed the lives](#) of so many Oregon women and their children who are battling generational cycles of poverty, trauma, and involvement in the criminal justice system. According to a 2020 report, more than 68,000 Oregon children have had a parent in prison.¹ **This bill ensures an investment in children who are often overlooked and underserved.**

Thank you for considering my testimony, I urge your support and passage of HB 2731.

Sincerely,

Rep Courtney Neron