

Submitter: Alison Cole  
On Behalf Of: Mary Barbee  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB520

March 13, 2023

Senator Dembrow and committee members,

We'd like to voice support for SB 520, which attempts to improve on Oregon's compassionate medical release opportunities for those incarcerated in our state. We are Alison Cole, of Portland, OR, and Mary Barbee, of Tualatin, OR. Both of our lives have been impacted by the incarceration of our loved ones, most profoundly in the case of Mary Barbee's two sons who are currently experiencing serious threats to their health, yet are being denied compassionate release in the states in which they are incarcerated.

We hope that broad support of SB 520 can put Oregon at the helm of reforming the compoundingly punitive nature of incarceration and serve as an example for other states to follow. We all know that incarceration affects poor communities and communities of color in excess, in the same way that health disparities also afflict these communities the most. We stand with Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility and other organizations in support of this bill.

Sincerely,  
Alison Cole & Mary Barbee