



This testimony is on behalf of the Multnomah Democrats' Criminal Justice Study Group, which supports SB 320.

Rewarding incarcerated individuals for appropriate institutional behavior and participation in certain programming is not only beneficial to the prisoner who qualifies for it but also beneficial to the Department of Corrections. One of the downsides of Measure 11 mandatory sentencing has been that it does not include the motivation for positive behavior that comes with the opportunity to earn time off one's sentence. Those who oversee incarcerated people would definitely benefit from motivated prisoners working to qualify for a sentence reduction. In addition, by reducing the amount of time served, which is a significant cost-saving measure, this is a benefit to Oregon taxpayers. We hope all Committee members vote YES on SB 320.

We also believe the length of a sentence for a particular category of crime is not always relevant to that particular person who committed the crime especially given any extenuating circumstances. We believe these sentence lengths should only be guidelines to be adjusted for each defendant.

While we strongly support this bill, we think it could be improved. We support giving the reduced-sentence opportunity to prisoners who have one M.11 conviction, but we see no logical reason not to allow every M.11 prisoner this opportunity. A reduction in sentence is about positive behavior in prison; it is not about the crime the person committed, neither the one for which they are currently serving time, nor for any crime they might have committed in the past for which they have already served their full time. We strongly recommend removing from SB 320 the restriction that this opportunity be available only to those with no prior M.11 record. Let's make this thoughtful bill even more logical. Please amend and pass SB 320 to the floor.