

# **OREGON TRIAL LAWYERS ASSOCIATION**

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Testimony of Arthur Towers

OTLA Political Director

**In Support of House Bill 2890**

Before the House Committee on Judiciary

March 28, 2023

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Wallan and Andersen, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2890.

Our members are lawyers who fight for underdogs. In this instance, the underdogs are adults in custody in need of health care.

Incarcerated Oregonians are not receiving the level of care they deserve. Our members have had to hold our government accountable at both the local and state level because the system is failing these Oregonians.

The Task Force on Corrections Medical Care, which the legislature created in 2021 has made a number of solid recommendations. HB 2890 advances several of these, specifically empowering the Corrections Ombudsman for prison health care to take action and to report directly to the legislature on necessary steps to improve the system.

Further HB 2890 directs the Department of Corrections to deliver lifesaving drugs such as naltrexone, methadone, and buprenorphine to adults in custody who suffer from substance abuse disorder.

These common-sense approaches are important follow-up steps building on the Task Force's work.

We urge an aye vote on this extremely important piece of legislation.