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Sent via submitted testimony and regular email only:

Sen. Floyd Prozanski
Sen.FloydProzanski@OregonLegislature.gov

Rep. Paul Evans
Rep.paulevans@oregonlegislature.gov

Rep. Kim Wallan
Rep.kimwallan@oregonlegislature.gov

Sen. Dennis Linthicum
Sen.DennisLinthicum@oregonlegislature.gov

**Re: Senate Bill 337
Testimony opposing the bill**

Dear Senators and Representatives:

I am an attorney practicing juvenile defense in Linn County. My practice is both in delinquency defense as well as dependency representation. I represent both children and parents and work with the Juvenile Defenders of Linn County (i.e., the “Consortium”).

I am concerned this bill aims to solve a problem that it will most certainly exacerbate.

Our Consortium consists of several attorneys, all of whom make juvenile law the sole focus of their practice, and most of whom have practiced in this area for multiple years. Although we find ourselves as adversaries in the courtroom, we are able to maintain a positive relationship and help one another so that our clients are getting the best possible results. We are able to hold one another to high standards.

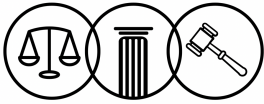
Perhaps most importantly, we are able to coordinate coverage for cases spanning across the spectrum, despite some of them being rather complex.

Within our group, I am the newest to the practice of juvenile law. Yet, despite that, I benefited from robust mentorship from each of the attorneys within our group. I was able to co-counsel several cases and discuss complicated issues that arose throughout. I still receive that benefit, despite having done it for several years.

Should this bill go through, I do not know who in our Consortium would continue a contract with the State. With each attorney having to take on the administrative burdens, I do believe it

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will deter many—especially those who are highly seasoned attorneys and bring an incredible amount of value and quality to the clients and to the system as a whole.

To clients, having a private practice attorney—devoid of the conflicts that arise in a centralized public defenders office, yet who is able to minimize the administrative burdens—is immensely valuable. To eliminate this model would undoubtedly erode such confidence.

Disbanding consortia across the state is not the solution to the problem that Oregon faces. In fact, it will likely make the problem worse. The proposed bill will further strain the system and erode client trust.

I am asking that you reject this bill.

Very Truly yours,

s/ Elijah R. L. Brown

Elijah R.L. Brown
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