

Kristy Laschober

kristylaschoberspeaks@gmail.com

Oregon Senate

SB 1082 Written Testimony

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Thank you Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber and members of the committee.

My name is Kristy Laschober and my life has been transformed by the support I received on my education journey. For that reason, I am asking for your YES vote on **SB 1082**.

Everyone knows that **education** is important for the future of Oregon and to leverage individual earning potential. It is **especially** important, though, to people who have been addicted, experienced immense trauma, poverty and neglect. Our jails and prisons are filled with such people. I know this because I was addicted to opioids and as a first time offender, I was sentenced to 5 years in federal prison.

Judge Ann Aiken strongly urged me to enroll in college when I was released 6 years ago and it was the best decision I was lovingly pushed into. I can say without a doubt that college saved my life.

I built close relationships with my peers and professors. Classroom discussions provided the opportunity for me to be vulnerable and share a part of my story in a safe environment and I was coaxed out of my comfort zone which allowed me to be slightly impressed by what I could accomplish. I got 100% on my first math test, the joy was indescribable - I was shocked. I couldn't help but wonder "What else can I achieve"?

While working full time I graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelors of Science in Innovation and Leadership from Southern Oregon University. My higher education experience continues to yield numerous benefits and healthy relationships. I wouldn't even know it was possible to have a voice the way I do now, if it wasn't for my professor who assigned Twitter for homework, But that's a great story for another time.

Currently, I am a Lead Life Coach, at Operation Restoration, a non-profit in New Orleans and I work with women reentering back into their community and the barriers that people who have an incarceration history face are **unbelievable**, we hear about

them all the time. But today YOU have the opportunity to **build a bridge** instead. Establishing a project that connects a vulnerable population to community colleges, public universities and apprenticeships, proves that YOU truly want to live and work in an inclusive and equitable state.

For these reasons I strongly urge that you support and pass **SB 1082**, a great way to build bi-partisan support. Thank you.

Thank you,

Kristy Laschober
541-631-8839