



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

**Oregon Youth Authority**

Office of the Director

530 Center Street NE, Suite 500

Salem, OR 97301-3765

Phone: 503-373-7205

Fax: 503-373-7622

[www.oregon.gov/OYA](http://www.oregon.gov/OYA)



April 7, 2023

The Honorable Senator Fred Girod, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Paul Holvey, Co-Chair  
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: HB 5006 Capital Construction Limitation and HB 5005 Bonding Authorization for Oregon Youth Authority

Dear Co-Chairs and members of the subcommittee:

I am writing to provide background information for funding for Oregon Youth Authority projects included in House Bills 5005 and 5006. The OYA projects proposed in these bills are critical to the juvenile justice system's mission of protecting the public, reducing crime, holding youth accountable, and providing opportunities for reformation in safe environments. They also are important to our agency's two largest initiatives — diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and positive human development (PHD) — both of which are rooted in research and best practices for reducing recidivism and rehabilitating youth. Lastly our major technology project, JJIS modernization, is important to every county in the state.

### **OYA Capital Construction and Improvements**

OYA's capital construction and improvements projects support our mission by constructing secure and safe physical plant environments that are conducive to youth reformation, equity, and inclusion.

In 2014, following a direction from the Ways and Means Committee, OYA developed a 10-Year Strategic Plan for Facilities to serve as a road map for capital construction. The plan, updated in 2019, focuses on resolving deferred maintenance needs, aligning and providing physical spaces to national and state best practices for juvenile treatment and reformation programs. The changes proposed in the 10-Year Strategic Plan are critical to supporting research-based, positive youth development services, and they are important to our agency's efforts to deliver culturally-appropriate, equitable, and inclusive services. The renovations also address much-needed seismic upgrades to many youth living units, program and educational venues.

The projects, including deferred maintenance, that need funding moving forward include:

1. **HB 5005 – Renovate and expand the living unit and support areas at Tillamook Youth Correctional Facility (\$8,420,000):** The two living units at this facility have not had a major renovation since they were built in the mid-1990s using a correctional, boot camp-style design. With small “gun slot” windows, little sunlight, cramped day rooms and restrooms that lack privacy and do not comply with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act, these living units are counterproductive to the principles of Positive Human Development. The remodel would resolve deferred maintenance, ensure that the interior spaces align with best practices, and create a developmentally-based physical environment. The project design is under contract and is progressing well.
2. **HB 5005 – Renovate and expand the living unit and support areas at Camp Riverbend Youth Transitional Facility near La Grande (\$5,455,000):** Camp Riverbend has two main buildings: the main Riverbend building, built in 2001, and the Hilgard building, built in 1979. Neither has had a major renovation since it was built; both will be renovated in this project. The original construction was based on a correctional, boot camp-style design, with small windows, little daylight, cramped day rooms, and restrooms that lack privacy and do not comply with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA). Just like the Tillamook remodel, the Riverbend project would fix the issues listed above while creating a developmentally-based physical environment. The project is also under contract for design and is progressing well.
3. **HB 5005 and 5006 – Renovate and expand the living unit and support areas at MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility in Woodburn (\$11,425,000):** MacLaren has eight living units on the west side of the campus that were built in the 1960s. In 2016, one unit was completely remodeled to address long-standing maintenance needs and to align with best practices and PHD standards. Currently, five more units are getting the same overhaul. Three of the units are 100% complete and two are currently under construction. The funding will also allow us to renovate the last two west side cottages, providing the youth housed in these units an equitable living situation compared to the other six cottages. Along with resolving all deferred maintenance, the projects will make sure interior spaces are aligned with PHD standards and have a normative, residential character. HB 5006 also specifically extends the expenditure limitation of previously approved Capital Improvement funding to June 30, 2025.
4. **HB 5005 and 5006 Capital Improvements All Facilities (\$11,795,000):** Capital improvement projects and resolving deferred maintenance and capital renewal at all OYA sites. Senate Bill 1067 targets a minimum 2% funding level, based on the current facility portfolio replacement value, for deferred maintenance/capital renewal. The funding is a critical component in our efforts to lower Facility Condition Index (FCI) percentages in our portfolio of buildings to an acceptable level. There are numerous ongoing and upcoming projects that are supported by this funding. A few examples are the ongoing \$2.7 million dollar renovation of Camp Tillamook Transition Facility. A major renovation

to the kitchen and living areas of the camp, and a full exterior improvement which focuses on improving the building envelope insulating properties. The funding is also supporting critical projects like the MacLaren Infirmary and Pharmacy Renovation, the regional standby generator replacement projects at Oak Creek YCF, Rogue Valley YCF and Eastern Oregon YCF. Wood shop dust collection system improvements which support important vocational education programs. HB 5006 also specifically extends the expenditure limitation of previously approved Capital Improvement funding to June 30, 2025.

5. **HB 5005 Control Room Renovations (\$330,000):** The existing control rooms at Oak Creek YCF, Rogue Valley YCF and Eastern Oregon YCF present difficulty and inefficiencies because the space design did not account for modern technologies and equipment common to modern control rooms. The buildings were constructed in 1995/1996 and did not have any video surveillance when constructed. PREA standards require video monitoring and surveillance. The control room equipment and counter layouts do not support the added video and technology requirements of modern times. The control rooms require a total remodel, operationally and from a safety standpoint. The rooms need to be modified to safely supervise two adjacent individual youth rooms. Youth are placed in these rooms when they are a risk to staff, themselves or other youth. Control room staff are required to have “eyes on” constant supervision of these youth. Cameras cannot substitute for direct visual supervision. The three projects are under contract and currently in the design phase.
6. **HB 5005 and 5006 Rogue Valley Facility Improvements (\$1,509,910):** This funding is to convert each of the three open bay dormitories into mini-dorm living, adds windows to the dormitories and living areas for natural light and visual connection to nature, repurposes the program areas for treatment groups and other program functions, renovates the day room to be more open for security purposes and renovates the control room into an secure office, renovates restrooms, resolves deferred maintenance, and upgrade all finishes and fixtures. 5,700 square feet each/22,800 total. One of the three living units are fully renovated and two are under renovation with a Contractor. The living units are being renovated one at a time. The remodel shifts the space from a correctional focus to a layout that is more treatment orientated and beneficial to behavioral and mental health programing. The project also increases seismic resiliency. HB 5006 also specifically extends the expenditure limitation of previously approved Capital Improvement funding to June 30, 2025.
7. **HB 5005 and 5006 Rogue Valley Living Unit Renovation (\$4,580,000):** Rogue Valley Positive Human Development living unit remodels. This funding supports renovating the 4<sup>th</sup> living unit. The funding converts the living unit from an open bay dormitory into mini-dorm living, adds windows to the dorms, day rooms and program and staff areas

for natural light and visual connection to nature, repurposes the program areas for treatment groups and other program functions, renovates the day room to be more open for security purposes and renovates the control room into an secure office, renovates restrooms, resolves deferred maintenance, and upgrade all finishes and fixtures. This is the last unit to be renovated and provides all youth an equitable treatment and housing. The remodel shifts the space from a correctional focus to a layout that is more treatment orientated and beneficial to behavioral and mental health programing. The project also increases seismic resiliency.

- 8. HB 5005 and 5006 Oak Creek New School and Vocational Education Facility (\$4,105,000):** This funding will allow the design process to begin, but will not provide funding for construction. Total funding for this project is \$11,859,642. A New High School and Vocational Education building will be constructed to advance the education, vocation, and development needs of the youth on campus. Oak Creek is the only female youth correctional facility OYA owns. This unique project will help to provide the much-needed equity by providing our female youth education and vocation opportunities similar to the male youth at other OYA sites. The 10-year plan established net square footage standards for youth in education and vocational spaces. The school and vocation education building will be constructed on south side of campus and will serve 32 youth. Each school will have classrooms and computer labs, interview and study rooms, nurse and security desks as well as common areas, vestibules and staff and youth restrooms. The school and vocation spaces will be designed to serve other purposes too, examples: emergency housing, medical and emergency operations. The school and vocational buildings will have environments designed for the special needs of youth housed in close-custody facilities, treatment-informed spaces for behavior management, self-contained and versatile program spaces, plentiful natural light, and spaces with open and engaging floor plans.

## **Technology**

- 1. House Bill 5005 – Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) Modernization (\$13,355,000):** provides funding for the Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS) modernization project.

Oregon's state and local juvenile justice continuum relies on JJIS as its unified core business application to track and implement individualized case plans. JJIS is used by more than 3,000 juvenile justice practitioners across the state. By statute, the state is responsible for stewarding this unified information system, the likes of which only exist in two other states. JJIS is governed by a board of local and state juvenile justice professionals.

The software platform JJIS uses to operate is over 20 years old and no longer adequately supported by the developers who created it. If we do not modernize the system, it will likely

fail, threatening the ability of juvenile justice professionals to do their jobs. Additionally given the 24/7 nature of our work, juvenile justice practitioners need access to the data in JJIS at any time and any place. The current JJIS application does not allow web access. The modernized version would be useable on mobile devices so case workers can get important information wherever and whenever they need it.

JJIS also needs significant upgrades to support greater disaggregation of data by race and ethnicity. This will help us identify systemic inequities so that we can work to correct them. JJIS is an essential source of the data we use in our Youth Reformation System to create tools that assist practitioners in making data-driven decisions to enhance public safety and improve youth outcomes. These, and all of OYA's major initiatives, research, reporting, and daily activities rely heavily on JJIS and would not be able to move forward if the system is not modernized.

Secretary of State audits of the existing JJIS system have clearly identified risks to critical reporting required by the Legislature, including data integrity, timeliness, and statewide evaluation of juvenile justice effectiveness. If we don't modernize JJIS, at some point these risks will shut down the ability to do the work of juvenile justice at both the state and the county levels. The obsolescence of the existing software affects our work with youth, their families, communities, and victims, and threatens the capacity of Oregon counties and OYA to reduce crime and improve outcomes for underserved populations.

The project consistently gets some of the highest marks from the Enterprise Information Technology Governance Committee and has received Stage-Gate Two endorsement. Currently we are on the cusp of receiving Stage Gate 3 endorsement. Following a competitive process, we awarded a contract to the implementation vendor and are in the contract negotiation process. Continued project funding is necessary to continue this work. Halting the project now would only cost more in the long run.

Each of these projects are critical to our success, and to the ability of Oregon's juvenile justice system to protect the public, hold youth accountable, and provide meaningful opportunities for reformation. They will support our efforts to be developmentally focused and reach our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'J. Brown'.

Joe O'Leary  
Director, Oregon Youth Authority  
[joe.oleary@oya.oregon.gov](mailto:joe.oleary@oya.oregon.gov)