

Dear Chair Steiner, Chair Sanchez, and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Sean Lo and I live in Portland Oregon. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for continued funding of the Criminal Justice Commission's Restorative Justice Grant Program (RJGP).

Restorative justice is real justice. It creates better options for crime survivors, people who have caused harm, and the community. Strong data from across the country and around the world demonstrates the efficacy of restorative justice in reducing recidivism and increasing survivor satisfaction. In addition, it creates stronger feelings of community and connection, likely explaining why those who engage in the restorative justice process are less likely to reoffend. I live in Portland, where we have two programs funded by the RJGP. I am eager to see these programs complete their pilot year and begin to grow and make an impact on my community. That cannot happen unless the Restorative Justice Grant Program is renewed.

Initiatives like these are proven solutions for incredibly complex problems and I would be disheartened and disappointed if investment in this area declined. A decrease in funding would almost certainly lead to poorer outcomes and higher costs for Oregonians like me. More frighteningly, it could result in more crime and survivor disempowerment.

I am so proud to live in a state that has recognized the importance of restorative justice. It is my hope that Oregon continue to fund the Criminal Justice Commission's Restorative Justice Grant Program.

Sincerely,  
Sean Lo