



BRITTANY HILL LAW

**Testimony of Brittany Hill, Attorney at Law  
May 3, 2023**

Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez, Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of the Board of Parole and Post-Prison Supervision (the Board) budget (SB 5528). My name is Brittany Hill, and I am an attorney licensed in Oregon. A big part of my practice involves representing Adults in Custody (AICs) in their hearings in front of the Board. There is a small group of dedicated attorneys who are currently working on parole in Oregon. I am honored to be one of them. We all value and enjoy this work. We want to continue doing this work.

To date, I have represented seven AICs in their parole hearings and am slated to represent at least four more this year. This is a very challenging and underappreciated area of work. This work has been one of my greatest joys of being an attorney. I love this work because it's legally complex and requires a great deal of patience, empathy, and relationship building.

Representing AICs in front of the Board takes a lot of time. Representation can start three to five months before an AIC's hearing date. During this time, I spend hours interviewing AICs and discussing their background, including childhood, crime, time in prison, and release plan, in great detail then turn this narrative into a memorandum that is, hopefully, persuasive to the Board. Then, I prepare AICs for their actual hearing by asking them questions and providing feedback on their answers before they testify in front of the Board. I also spend time speaking to family members and support networks, often helping them craft support letters and assisting them with testimony if they are testifying during the hearing. Hearings can last anywhere from three to seven hours, and I must be present and diligent with my advocacy throughout the entire hearing. All in all, the time I spend working on a parole case, including the actual hearing, is not proportional to the amount that I get paid, \$1,900.

The low pay has made it difficult to continue this work; work that I love and work that is incredibly important. As a solo practitioner, I must weigh work that pays well versus the

time commitment. With the current pay scale and the amount of time parole cases require, it's often to my economic detriment to work on parole.

Having quality attorneys representing AICs in front of the Board is important. AICs need to feel as though they have good representation. Often, by the time AICs start preparing for their hearings, they are distrustful of attorneys and the system. Being represented by someone who cares and is good at what they do can make a substantial difference in the AIC's attitude, their overall satisfaction with the process, and, in some instances, an AIC's success at their hearing. I can also imagine it is helpful to the Board to have attorneys who are well-versed in the legal complexities that parole provides who also enjoy the work.

I am fully in support of the following:

**POP 105 + \$350,000: increased pay for attorneys and additional case types**

Currently, the Board only pays a flat rate for Murder Review and Juvenile parole hearings. It is necessary to increase and maintain rates for all parole hearings. All parole hearings require meticulous work and client preparation, and attorneys should be paid a comparable rate.

**POP 102: victim services position**

Parole hearings are difficult for everyone involved, especially victims. It is vital that they have assistance in navigating the parole process and all that it requires of them. Funding an additional victim specialist will greatly help with this process.

Thank you,

Brittany Hill  
Attorney at law