



To: Joint Subcommittee On Public Safety

Date: February 13, 2025

RE: Support for HB 5005 & the Restorative Justice Grant Fund

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon (RJCO) to provide our full support for the passage of HB 5005 and, in particular, POP 106 which allocates dedicated funding for the Restorative Justice Grant Fund. In fact, while the Criminal Justice Commission has requested a \$4M allocation to this fund, we would urge you to allocate at least \$6-\$7M in funding for these impactful, statewide programs.

Over the last four years, the Oregon Legislature, through the Criminal Justice Commission, has funded the development of some of the most innovative, victim-led, community-driven and impactful public safety programs ever developed in our state. From coastal communities in Lincoln County, to Medford and Grants Pass, from Bend to Wasco County and the Columbia Gorge, from Lane and Marion counties up through Washington, Portland and Clackamas, there are now 15 local programs working hand-in-hand with law enforcement, District Attorneys, Victim Advocates and a myriad of community partners to help deliver justice, safety and accountability without resorting to incarceration. In particular, the benefits of to our communities that go above and beyond traditional justice responses include:

- Healing for Crime Survivors - high rates of survivor satisfaction show that participation in restorative processes increases victims' perceptions of safety, security, and reduces post-traumatic stress.
- Community Safety – evidence of reductions in recidivism for responsible parties (the offender)
- Accountability for Responsible Party – those that have caused harm (the offender) confront and address the impact they have had on others (victim(s)) and agree to take accountability and make amends.
- Long-Term Cost Savings - restorative justice programs have, in study after study, shown to have an 85% average satisfaction and positive outcome rate for all those involved. This is vastly better than the positive outcomes achieved by most traditional justice responses to crime. These positive outcomes directly correlate to reduced system costs - prosecution, public defense, courts, jail/prisons, probation, etc.
- Community Connectedness & Improved Ability to Handle Conflict - restorative justice influences the way people relate to their friends, family, and community. It teaches people the life skills necessary to respond appropriately to the people around them rather than isolating them from their community and depriving them of those skills.

Having invested \$8M in these local Restorative Justice programs across all of Oregon in the last four years, now is the time to both continue and build on these impactful programs so that our communities can reap the long-lasting benefits of true community and victim-led justice.

Again, I urge you to support HB 5005 and allocate \$6-7M in funding towards POP 106.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Fulford", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Fulford
President