

Submitter: Karen James

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2555

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chair Chotzen, Vice-Chair Wallan, and members of the Committee,

The Family Sentencing Alternative Program (FSAP) reduces recidivism and keeps families together.

I am writing in support of HB 2555 which expands and strengthens the Family Sentencing Alternative Program (created in 2015 through passage of HB3503).

Years ago as my adult son spiraled out of control and refused care, his family desperately and unsuccessfully sought mental health and addiction treatment. At that time we were told that our choices were hospitalization, incarceration or death. He committed a Measure 11 crime and was sentenced to almost 6 years in prison. He spent 4 years at EOIC then was transferred to the Oregon State Penitentiary mental health infirmary to finish his sentence.

My son was a bright, responsible TAG student who had a promising future that was devastated by mental health and addiction. His lengthy prison sentence severely exacerbated his mental health condition and he is now under guardianship and receiving benefits from SSA, the state and county.

My son would have benefitted from a program such as FSAP. Instead of a six-year sentence, being allowed to remain in the community close to his family and friends and allowed to participate in a program such as FSAP and receive services and care could have changed the trajectory of his life.

Oregon is on the right track in creating the Family Sentencing Alternative Program. I urge your support for HB 2555.

Sincerely,

Karen James