



## Written Testimony in Support of SB 938

Members of the Committee:

My name is Colleen Regalbuto, and I serve as the Program Manager at Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center, a nonprofit dedicated to community mediation and restorative justice in Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, and Wheeler counties.

I strongly support SB 938. With grant funding from the Criminal Justice Commission, Six Rivers launched *Circles of Peace*, a restorative justice program designed to meet the unique needs of our rural communities. Now in its pilot year, this program was developed in response to an extensive community readiness assessment, which revealed local support for restorative justice as an option for victims and survivors of crime. There is strong demand for this program- our team is actively handling referrals from multiple public agency partners who recognize the value of this approach.

Recently, we facilitated a case involving an assault and harassment between two individuals. Through a series of talking circles—both separately and together—the participants explored the harm caused, acknowledged its impact, and created meaningful agreements to prevent future violence. One participant reflected, *"This circle can completely change someone's life around."*

Confidentiality is fundamental to restorative justice, which is why the provisions in SB 938 are so crucial. For programs like *Circles of Peace* to succeed statewide, participants must have absolute assurance that any personal information shared with government agencies will remain confidential and used solely for statistical purposes.

I support SB 938's option to fund a statewide restorative justice coalition. Our center has directly benefited from the work of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon, which has connected us with training and technical advisors, and has provided platforms for programs across the state to collaborate and share best practices.

In addition, SB 938 allows for the creation of the Restorative Justice Grant Program Account. In order for restorative justice programs to be impactful, they need ongoing, stable funding. Creation of this account is a positive step in this direction.

In summary, I urge you to support SB 938 to ensure restorative justice programs can continue offering meaningful resolution for those impacted by crime. You can learn more about our *Circles of Peace* program at [6rivers.org](http://6rivers.org).

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Regalbuto".

Colleen Regalbuto

Program Manager

Six Rivers Dispute Resolution Center