

Submitter: Tracy Frazier

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2614

I write to stress the importance of consortiums to Oregon's public defense landscape within the juvenile context. Most, if not all, of the attorneys in my consortium would not be practicing in this field without the support and collective benefits of a consortium. In particular, I joined my consortium when re-entering juvenile practice after almost a decade of handling purely civil work. My consortium handles work in Clatsop and Columbia Counties, which are both underserved. I would not have re-entered the field without the confidence that I had access to a group of experienced practitioners to support my development and answer my urgent questions. This is particularly true in rural counties, where many of the particularities of the court and judges are not written. While I assume that the argument can be made that these resources exist elsewhere, from a practical perspective that is not the reality.

Further, for those of us that perform juvenile work part-time, the burden of administrating and negotiating the contract with the State is prohibitive, to the point I (for one) would likely stop performing this critical work. In an era where we are already so desperate to maintain sufficient staffing levels, I implore the State to consider the blow prohibiting consortiums have on the number of practitioners able to represent our most vulnerable families. In our consortium we hold each other to the highest standards and elevate our representation.

Respectfully,

Tracy Frazier