

Co-Chairs Broadman and Evans, and members of the committee,

My name is Talia Trout and I am the Executive Director of Resolve Center for Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice. **I am writing in support of the Criminal Justice Commission's Restorative Justice Grant Program and I am asking this committee to allocate \$8 million for the next biennium to this VITAL program.** The CJC's Restorative Justice Grant Program provides critical funds for restorative justice programs across the state that center the needs of crime survivors and that keep the community safe by addressing the underlying causes of criminal behavior, by fostering real accountability for those who have caused harm, and by meaningfully tending to the trauma crime survivors experience. **It is important that this grant program remain funded and that it has stability in funding by being included in the Criminal Justice Commission's current service level budget.**

Funding restorative justice is crucial because it offers a powerful, effective alternative to the traditional criminal justice system. Unlike incarceration or conviction, restorative justice provides victims and survivors with a meaningful path to healing and accountability, helping them regain a sense of control over their recovery. By fostering a community-based approach, it supports public safety and promotes integration, ensuring that those responsible for harm can acknowledge their actions and work toward repairing the damage caused. This not only benefits survivors but also empowers offenders to take responsibility and reduces recidivism. Moreover, restorative justice is a cost-effective solution—community-based alternatives to prosecution are significantly less expensive than the current system and ease the burden on overcrowded courtrooms. Oregon, in particular, needs more approaches to addressing harm that do not rely solely on incarceration, making restorative justice an essential investment for a more compassionate and effective justice system.

To date, the Oregon legislature has invested \$8 million to support fifteen restorative justice programs. Approximately half of these programs have received funding since the Restorative Justice Grant Program's first application cycle in July of 2022. The other half are new programs, which received planning grants for the beginning of 2025 to develop the concept for their pilot programs. These 15 programs span a significant portion of the state, serving 17 different counties with one program accepting cases from anywhere in the state.

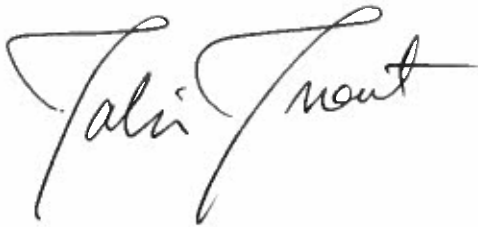
In 2024, the legislature invested \$4 million in the CJC's Restorative Grant Program for a one-year period, with the possibility of a three-month extension for established programs. \$2.7 million went to continue the seven established programs with \$1.3 million distributed to eight new programs seeking to expand access to restorative justice to other communities around the state. Based on these numbers, it is evident that an increased allocation is necessary to support the continued growth of the established programs and to provide an opportunity for the planning grant programs to move into their pilot stage. **I am requesting that you recognize the**

importance of these programs and the value they lend to Oregon's public safety system by allocating \$8 million to the Criminal Justice Commission's Restorative Justice Grant Program and by including this grant program in the CJC's current service level budget.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Please help Oregon maintain its place as a leader in restorative approaches to harm, by investing \$8 million in these healing and transformative programs.

With sincere gratitude and hope,

Talia Trout
Executive Director
Resolve Center for Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Talia Trout". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "T" and a long, sweeping underline.