

TINA KOTEK  
GOVERNOR



March 31, 2025

From: Racial Justice Council

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety

Dear Co-Chair Senator Broadman, Co-Chair Representative Evans, and Committee Members:

The Racial Justice Council advises the Governor and provides communities that have been historically excluded from decision-making tables more meaningful access to and a voice in the policy making that directly impacts the lives of Oregonians of color.

We, the Racial Justice Council, are writing to express strong support for two specific aspects of the Criminal Justice Commission's agency budget: the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program and the Restorative Justice Grant Program.

**The Justice Reinvestment Equity Program (JREP)** invests in culturally specific services that are best designed to support historically underserved communities. The first round of grantmaking was successful, and funding was included in the Governor's Recommended Budget for the program's continuation. This investment will keep families and communities safe.

**The Restorative Justice Grant Program** supports survivor centered approaches to harm that prioritize victim healing and foster true accountability, leading to lower rates of reoffending, improvements in public safety, and a reduction in the state's reliance on costly carceral approaches. Community based approaches to harm are essential to addressing the unrepresented crisis in public defense and the crisis of mass incarceration. Both of these issues disproportionately impact Black and Brown Oregonians. In addition, people of color are more likely to be victims of crime and are also more likely to be distrustful of our current criminal systems. Creating alternative pathways to healing is essential for supporting survivors and for addressing the trauma associated with crime. Our current system offers retribution and incapacitation. Restorative justice offers healing, accountability, transformation, and a safer, more inclusive community.

We ask that you continue to support system impacted Oregonians of color by continuing investments in both of these programs.

On Behalf of the Racial Justice Council,

Tristen Edwards, RJC Member

Paul Solomon, RJC Member

CC:

Senator Wlnsvey Campos

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Senator David Brock Smith  
Representative Willy Chotzen  
Representative Dacia Grayber  
Representative Jeffrey Helfrich  
Representative Rick Lewis