



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Criminal Justice Commission

885 Summer St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
503-378-4830

Kenneth Sanchagrin
Executive Director

COMMISSIONERS:

Paul Solomon, Chair
Jeff Auxier
Jessica Beach
Rob Bovett, Vice Chair
Tim Freeman
Carl Macpherson
Lisa Norton
Sen. Floyd Prozanski*
Rep. Rick Lewis*
*Non-Voting

9 April 2025

RE: Senate Bill 881

Dear Co-Chair Prozanski, Co-Chair Kropf, Vice-Chair Mannix, and Members of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response:

I am writing to provide testimony regarding Senate Bill 881, which would transfer responsibilities of the Oversight and Accountability Council (OAC), which provides grants to help fund behavioral health resource networks (BHRNs) to the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission. While the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission takes no position on this measure, I am here to provide testimony concerning the possible implementation of this policy change, should it pass.

The Commission appreciates the faith that the Legislature has in the agency when it comes to effectively and efficiently awarding state dollars for various public safety programs. What makes the Commission a good steward of state dollars is that we are a lean agency of incredibly dedicated professionals who work to leverage our expertise in criminal justice system and analytic capacity to make data driven funding decisions. We are dedicated to moving quickly and pragmatically, and because of this approach we are often asked to take on new assignments in response to urgent public safety needs, as we have done for deflection, organized retail theft, and illegal marijuana interdiction, to name a few.

Senate Bill 881 would significantly expand the scope of the Commission's responsibilities, moving beyond its core public safety mission into a much more central role in the state's behavioral health system. This expansion would pose challenges to the Commission and would, at least at the outset, not play to the Commission's strengths I previously mentioned. At present, we currently lack the staff and depth of knowledge necessary to implement a new behavioral and mental health program of this size and scope. The Commission also lacks access to public health and behavioral health data and, at least as of this time, we lack the capacity to expand into that arena, even if we had access. While this capacity could be developed over time, it would likely

Improving the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems.

take several years to build the expertise necessary to oversee this new program according to the expectations of the Legislature. Senate Bill 881 would also effectively double the grantmaking responsibilities of the agency. Currently, the Commission manages approximately 215 grantee agreements per biennium. With the addition of the responsibility for funding BHRNs across the state, the agency would be taking on at least 225 additional grantees, based on past BHRN awards under the OAC.

Internal analyses of the implementation of Senate Bill 881 along with the ongoing management of BHRN funding has led us to estimate that the Commission would require approximately fifteen to twenty positions to do the work. These positions would cut across all divisions of the agency, ranging from additional data analysts, researchers, and IT professionals in our research division, contract managers and compliance positions with our operations division, and grant managers within our programs division. To hire and onboard this many positions would pose a challenge in and of itself, as the Commission largely relies on other agencies for HR support. An expansion of this scale would also lead to the Commission having over fifty employees, which is a threshold where additional reporting and regulatory oversight is required by the Department of Administrative Services.

While the challenges would be significant, the Commission would be dedicated to implementing and managing the BHRN funding program with the same approach it takes to any new program given to us by the Legislature. We would endeavor to play to our strengths and would seek to provide a high level of customer service and effective level of oversight commensurate with the essential nature of this funding. That being said, we would require patience from the Legislature along with the investment necessary to ensure the Commission is appropriately resourced and supported to meet the high bar that has been established by our past work.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you require any additional information or have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth Sanchagrin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kenneth Sanchagrin