



Oregon

Oregon Public Defense Commission

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The Honorable Fred Girod
The Honorable Rob Nosse
Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction
900 Court St. NE, Suite 254
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Testimony in Support of Bond Authorization for the Financial & Case Management System (FCMS) Project

Dear Co-chairs:

The Oregon Public Defense Commission (OPDC) respectfully urges your support for full funding of the Financial & Case Management System (FCMS) project bonding request. The FCMS initiative is not only a technology modernization effort—it is a core pillar of Oregon’s response to longstanding challenges in public defense and is directly aligned with recent legislative mandates and recommendations aimed at increasing equity, accountability, and structural integrity in indigent defense. The FCMS project is designed to replace OPDC’s end-of-life internal database structure with a cloud-hosted, Commercial-Off-the-Shelf (COTS) system. The project budget is intended to support a Software as a Service (SaaS) system. OPDC is requesting \$13,915,000 in bonding authority for the project. Total projected expenditures are \$16,677,222, inclusive of debt service and cost of issuance.

Background: Urgent Systemic Needs and Mandated Reform

Oregon’s public defense system has been under critical review by the Sixth Amendment Center (6AC), the Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ), and the legislature in response to widespread concerns about inadequate access to justice for indigent clients. Senate Bill 337 (2023) and related reform measures specifically call for structural improvements to how services are managed, measured, and funded.

The need for a comprehensive financial and case management system has been emphasized repeatedly as foundational to any meaningful reform. Without FCMS, the state lacks the infrastructure to reliably and accurately:

- Track case-level data and provider assignments in real time;
- Ensure timely, accurate financial reimbursements;
- Monitor provider workloads and contract compliance; and

- Provide transparent, audit-ready reporting to the legislature and oversight agencies.

FCMS is a direct response to these gaps and a critical investment in fulfilling the intent of SB 337 and related legislation aimed at rebuilding Oregon's public defense infrastructure.

Project Performance: Stage Gate Advancement & Governance Milestones.

The FCMS project has followed the Enterprise Information Services (EIS) stage gate governance model and is currently in the third stage gate: Implementation Planning Phase. OPDC has demonstrated full compliance with each gate's requirements, gaining approval of Stage Gate 1, Stage Gate 2, including submission and approval of:

- A comprehensive business case (Stage Gate 1);
- A completed and approved request for proposals and procurement plan (Stage Gate 2); and
- Numerous other artifacts were approved for Stage Gate 2 as well.

Active procurement activities include a published request for proposals (RFP), completion of the first round of evaluations by an evaluation committee that includes internal and external partners, with a second round of evaluations currently being planned. Stage Gate 3 artifacts include the refinement of the Scope, Schedule, and Budget to +/- 10% accuracy, which is in progress, along with refreshing numerous other required Stage Gate 3 artifacts.

Each of those milestones was completed in collaboration with our professional project management team in the commission's IT division, our procurement officer, our change management partner, Moss Adams, and in alignment with EIS and Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) oversight guidance. Our multi-year plan has remained strategically aligned with both internal governance and statewide IT investment protocols.

What's at Stake: The Cost of Delay or Underfunding

Failing to fund this project through to implementation would have serious, statewide consequences, which may:

- Undermine legislative intent: SB 337 and related reform efforts cannot be effectively implemented without the data transparency and operational accountability that FCMS provides;
- Disrupt operational inefficiencies: Providers, staff, and contractors continue to rely on fragmented, manual processes that delay payments and hinder service delivery;
- Jeopardize audit compliance: The state remains vulnerable to financial and legal risk due to inconsistent reporting tools and inadequate data collection;
- Spoil momentum and stakeholder trust: Over two years of collaborative work, planning, and provider engagement would be stalled midstream, eroding goodwill and public confidence.

Why Continued Funding Matters

By fully funding FCMS through implementation, Oregon has the opportunity to:

- Modernize public defense operations statewide with a system built for efficiency and transparency;
- Demonstrate legislative follow-through on mandated reform recommendations;
- Provide providers with the tools they need to deliver consistent, accountable services; and
- Ensure the state meets its constitutional obligations to indigent defendants under the Sixth Amendment.

We are not simply investing in a system—we are building the strong foundation of a just and accountable public defense model for Oregon’s future.

Conclusion

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to justice, accountability, and transparency. We respectfully urge you to support full funding for OPDC’s bonding request as a vital component of Oregon’s public defense reform strategy.