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April 10, 2017

House Judiciary Committee  
Rep. Jeff Barker, Chair  
Rep. Andy Olsen, Vice Chair  
Rep. Jennifer Williamson, Vice Chair  
Rep. Chris Gorsek  
Rep. Mitch Greenlick  
Rep. Ann Lininger

Rep. Bill Post  
Rep. Tawna Sanchez  
Rep. Sherrie Sprenger  
Rep. Duane Stark  
Rep. A. Richard Vial

Dear Chair Barker and members of the committee:

We are writing in support of HB 3078—the “Safety and Savings” bill. Our work in recent years had brought us into contact with the problems caused by prison overcrowding as well as with the problems of providing effective interventions and support in the community to reduce recidivism when people come out of incarceration. That is why we have supported the Justice Reinvestment Initiative and why we strongly support HB 3078.

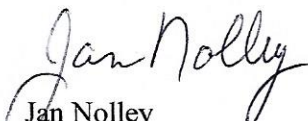
We know that drug and alcohol addiction drive a very large percentage of property crimes. We also know that addiction and abuse are especially heavy drivers of the crimes that women commit. And since the population pressure are especially heavy on the women’s prison at Coffee Creek, legislation should be particularly focused at present on that problem, especially because the number of bed reductions needed to forestall a new prison is relatively small.

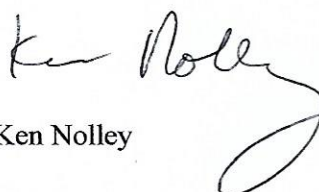
We believe that HB 3078 is wisely tailored to deal with overcrowding at Coffee Creek through its focus on the custodial parents of younger children. It will provide additional tools to divert selected offenders into community-based programs that deal with the root causes of their offending and that simultaneously keep them with their children—in turn preventing the uprooting of the children from the custodial parent into the foster care system.

HB 3078 will provide accountability by updating and improving the Family Sentencing Act that you all passed in 2015. The bill will also provide funding for Victim Services, which remain woefully underfunded. Finally, the bill continues the impetus of Justice Reinvestment, continuing to limit prison growth by investing in community services. We live in Marion County and have worked on reentry issues here. Our county’s efforts using justice reinvestment funds and strategies in the last four years have produced a dramatic decline in prison use.

Oregon has begun a very successful transition with Justice Reinvestment. Spending another 17.5 M on a new women’s prison and another 20M each biennium represents a surrender to past policies. Please support HB 3078 and keep Oregon on the successful path it began back in 2013.

Sincerely,

  
Jan Nolley

  
Ken Nolley