



Legislative Testimony

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

April 12, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Barker, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary

RE: House Bill 3078

Chair Barker and members of the House Judiciary Committee, for the record, I am Jeremiah Stromberg, the Assistant Director of Community Corrections for the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC). I am here to share information related to HB 3078.

What the Bill Does:

HB 3078 modifies eligibility for the Family Alternative Sentencing Pilot (FSAP) Program, expands Short-Term Transitional Leave (STTL), reduces presumptive sentences, and eliminates mandatory sentences for certain property crime convictions.

Background Information:

I am here to provide context to how this bill impacts DOC, from a community supervision perspective and prison bed impact. By now, you all have heard of the on-going success of STTL:

- More than 4,000 inmates have participated since the last expansion from 30 days to 90 days;
- Less than 5 percent returned for failing the program;
- One percent returned for committing new crimes; and
- Participants have lower one- and two-year recidivism rates than those who did not participate in the program.

Some of the early successes of the FSAP Program include:

- 75 participants and more than 130 children impacted who may otherwise be in foster care;
- Only 2 participants were revoked to prison; and
- Support from the District Attorneys, community corrections, and DOC to eliminate criminal history as a barrier to participation.

These programs are working, and DOC is pleased to see so many partners engaged in how to expand, amend, and improve these programs. Programs that reward positive behavior provide better public safety outcomes and reduce the use of prison beds.

And as you know, the department is at an extremely critical juncture as it relates to the prison population. Looking at the female population, these programs have been two of the primary factors in preventing the need to open a second facility. If the women's prison population continues to climb, we will have to find other alternatives – outside Coffee Creek Correctional Facility – to house the female population. The choices are few and could include opening an additional facility, sending females out of state, or utilizing rental bed agreements with county sheriffs.

Our goal is to work with the Legislature and our public safety partners to see programs such as FSAP and STTL, along with work release, which has recently been expanded in Lane County and added in Marion County, continue to succeed. The other choices I mentioned a moment ago, are expensive, provide less support, treatment, and work opportunities, and result in lower public safety returns.

In closing, we recognize this bill goes beyond the programs mentioned and also addresses sentencing changes that would impact the prison population as well. We are willing to aid as needed in these difficult discussions and to provide any information the committee would find helpful.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Submitted by:

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