



Legislative Testimony

Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association

May 25, 2017

The Honorable Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair
The Honorable Representative Mike McLane, Vice-Chair
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield, Vice-Chair
House Committee on Rules, Members

Dear Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee:

Re: Testimony in support of HB 3078-2

Dear Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association is an association of attorneys who represent juveniles and adults in delinquency, dependency, criminal prosecutions, appeals, civil commitment and post-conviction relief proceedings throughout the state of Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments in support of HB 3078-2.

Over the course of 5 years as a criminal defense and juvenile dependency lawyer, I personally worked with the population that HB 3078-2 aims to positively impact. Day after day, I sat with women in custody at the jail facing significant prison sentences on property and drug crimes, many of whom had limited criminal histories and pasts riddled with trauma and abuse. Many of these women were mothers, and not only were they facing criminal charges, but they were also facing the loss of their children in dependency court—due to their incarceration, criminal activities, and often, drug addictions, the Department of Human Services had removed their children and placed them in foster care. Over the course of time, I witnessed these mothers (and fathers) go to prison on drug and property crimes, and I witnessed the State terminate their rights to their children while they were in prison because they were unable to complete treatment and be available to parent soon enough for their children to be returned to their care.

This tale is common in Oregon, and it is truly devastating to the parents, to the children, and ultimately to our communities. HB 3078-2 is a strong piece of proposed legislation that contemplates and aims to address the human as well as the financial toll on the State of Oregon.

By removing ID Theft and Theft I from ORS 137.717, expanding work release programs, broadening local 416 programs, increasing short term transitional leave to 120 days, revising and preserving the Family Sentencing Alternative Program, maintaining Justice Reinvestment, and investing in the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence fund, HB 3078-2 addresses the significant problems Oregon faces.

By voting in favor of HB 3078-2, this legislature can invest in the state's citizens by choosing education, mental health treatment, addiction treatment, and community based engagement and accountability.

OCDLA, as an organization that represents families in Oregon, strongly urges an "aye vote" to HB 3078-2. Thank you for your consideration.

Mary A. Sell
Legislative Representative

For questions or comments contact Mary A. Sell, OSB # 111401
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