



Multnomah County Board of Commissioners

501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600
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Phone: (503) 988-3308

February 3, 2016

Dear Members of Oregon's Congressional Delegation,

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners writes to express support for S. 2123, the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act. Multnomah County plays a major role in our state's public safety system, operating two jails and overseeing more than 12,000 individuals on supervision in the community. As the largest social safety net provider in the region, it is critical that individuals receive the right services to meet their needs. We know firsthand the importance of reforming the criminal justice system and we commend efforts, like S. 2123, that aim to achieve these reforms.

S. 2123 will reduce sentencing disparity, eliminate unnecessary confinement, establish more rational and appropriate sentencing policies and lead to better management of limited correctional resources. We also support provisions in S. 2123 that would promote the expungement of certain juvenile offenses, prohibit juvenile solitary confinement except in limited circumstances, and increase the instances in which juveniles are eligible for parole. Further, we support pre-release reentry programs featured in S. 2123 that would help incarcerated individuals prepare to reintegrate back into society. These individuals return to their communities with complex health, education, housing and other needs, which, if not addressed, can increase their likelihood of returning to jail or prison. Reentry programs are integral to their successful reintegration into the community.

Reentry programs are essential for formerly incarcerated individuals prior to their release from correctional facilities, as well as after they return to their communities. We hope you will also give consideration and support to the Second Chance Reauthorization Act (S. 1513/H.R. 3406), which would reauthorize and improve Second Chance Act programs that improve outcomes for individuals returning to communities. The Act improves the coordination of reentry services and policies at the state, tribal and local levels and funds demonstration grants, reentry courts, family-centered programs, mental health and addiction treatment and employment and mentoring services.

We commend you for your work on the Sentencing Reform Act and the Second Chance Reauthorization Act and look forward to working with you to advance these measures.

Sincerely,

Deborah Kafoury
Multnomah County Chair

Jules Bailey
District 1 Commissioner

Loretta Smith
District 2 Commissioner

Judy Shiprack
District 3 Commissioner

Diane McKeel
District 4 Commissioner