

December 7, 2016

The Honorable Deborah Kafoury, Chair
Multnomah County Board of Commissioners
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd, Suite 600
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Chair Kafoury and Commissioners:

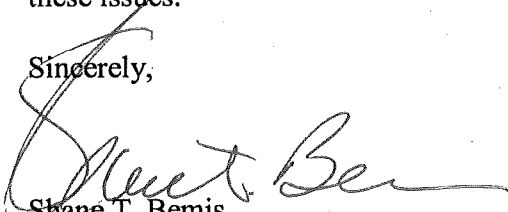
I write regarding the potential elimination of 118 jail beds at the Multnomah County's Inverness Jail Dorm Five. I deeply respect the pressures we face in public funding, especially in this property tax environment, and I am very cognizant that criminal justice reforms are extremely necessary nationwide, and right here at home. I greatly appreciate the County's interest in pursuing reforms that could save public funds, decrease incarceration and recidivism rates, and provide better criminal justice outcomes.

That said, I do not believe we are there yet. When our residents are victims of consequential crimes, like stolen vehicles for example, they expect that the suspected perpetrators will be booked in jail, not issued a simple citation. When the jails are full, however, we are left with no other options, and we fail to meet the expectations of those we serve, essentially playing catch-and-release with those who threaten our residents and the livability they enjoy.

Given that the recommendation to achieve budgetary reductions through the closure of Dorm Five belonged to the previous Sheriff's Administration, it makes sense for the Commission to use contingency funds to pause, evaluate options, and work expediently in the very short-term to put in place the criminal justice alternatives and reforms the County seeks. Once those systems are in place, we will have a stronger picture of the demand for jail beds post-intervention, and be able to adjust the provision of beds accordingly.

Once again, I want to emphasize my strong support for productive alternatives. These are complex issues and I appreciate your courage in exploring prudent and effective reforms. However, it is critical that these reforms be fully in place and producing proven results before jail capacity is further constrained, complicating the exceptionally difficult job our local law enforcement officers face on a daily basis. Thank you for your leadership and consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,



Shane T. Bemis
Mayor of Gresham

CC: Gresham City Council

Date: December 8, 2016 Meeting

To: Multnomah County Board of Commissioners and Staff

From: Doug Daoust, Mayor of Troutdale

**Written Testimony for: Agenda Title: BUDGET MODIFICATION # MCSO-02-17:
District 4 Sponsored Dorm 5 Funding Contingency Request of \$505,320**

My testimony today comes from having very personal and prolonged exposure to the criminal justice system in both Multnomah and Clackamas Counties by way of a family member who has been in and out of jail for various reasons.

I applaud the good work that Multnomah County criminal justice system partners are doing to divert adults from custody, like the LEAD program and the Unity Center. However I do not have the faith required to say that these programs will do much to relieve effects of closing Dorm 5 next year. Time will tell whether the LEAD program targets offenders in East County.

It's no wonder that the East County elected officials are in support of keeping the dorms operating through the Fiscal Year. We get a funny feeling in our stomachs when the County talks about closing beds and releasing prisoners. Maybe that's due to seeing increases in crime in our East County neighborhoods, and witnessing our neighbor who was in jail, get released only to recommit similar crimes again. We know the inmates have free will when it comes to participating, or not, in programs that are provided.

As one of your stakeholders, I'm not looking forward to the County possibly being in a continual state of jail population emergency in 2017 without Dorm 5. This would mean that some inmates will be released that should not be out of custody.

Funding this request will allow the Sheriff's Office to continue the operations of Dorm 5 until other efforts are underway to provide alternatives and further reduce the use of jail beds.

In summary, closing Dorm 5 does not support the collective efforts or overarching goals of the County's criminal justice system and brings about the very consequences our partners have worked hard to avoid.

For these reasons, I respectfully request this Board approve the \$505,320 in contingency funding to fund Dorm 5 and associated escort services for the remainder of the Fiscal Year. I see the data, and I see the need is definitely in place.

/s/ Doug Daoust, Mayor of Troutdale