



Agenda/Notes

Office of Governor Tina Kotek
RJC Criminal Justice Reform Committee
January 26, 2026 – Zoom
10:00 am – 12:00 pm

MEMBERS

X	Babak Zolfaghari-Azar		Nansi Lopez		Shaylie Pickrell
	Cameron Hayes	X	Dr. Nicholas Crapser		Sterling Cunio
X	Mariana Urdaneta Sanchez	X	Paul Solomon	X	Tristen Edwards
	Michelle Love	X	Shay Huber		

OTHER ATTENDEES

	Andre Bealer	X	Javier Cervantes	X	Shannon Wright
X	Yasmin Solorio	X	Valerie Colas		

Topic/Lead	Notes/Main Points	Decisions/Action Items
Welcome	<i>Tristen welcomes and starts meeting at 11:02am.</i>	
Presentation from Partnership for Safety and Justice: Insights of a Possible New OSP Facility—Shannon Wight	<p>Babak: Would like to introduce Shannon wight, Deputy Director of Partnership for Safety and Justice (PSAJ). PSAJ is a nonprofit criminal justice reform organization. This was a priority of the justice council before and advocating for this in short session next week.</p> <p>Shannon: Hoping to get your support for re: Department of Corrections (DOC) plan to build a new prison. We are in a bunch of intersecting moments, backlash on measure 110 experiment and 2020, federal level of authoritarianism, funding cuts to most vulnerable. What do we do in that moment, and part of that moment is we have to protect the most vulnerable and preserve our past wins and build a broad base of support that creates a stable foundation. Wanted to lay out that landscape as a framework on legislative asks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Justice Reinvestment Equity Program (JREP).• No new prison to be built before a strategic planning and stakeholder engagement has been done. <p>JREP passed in 2013, preventing state from opening two prisons. It was created as a main supplement to the main investment to ensure it was getting money to those who need it most. It unfortunately was not funded this past session.</p> <p>Paul: Do you feel this was an education issue where</p>	

some legislators didn't make the distinction or were there other issues at play?

Shannon: There were a lot of issues – lack of education or data but in the end the co-chairs of Ways and Means saw it as one-off funding. We didn't realize that was a concern and didn't educate that avenue. We advocated hard to make this happen. It's always was meant to have been an integrated program. Over 20K people have been served over the last few years (Oct 2023-Sept 2025). Metrics have been impressive. Community Impact highlights include Flip the Script, Clackamas Women's Services, and Black Alliance and Social Empowerment.

You have the "JREP Letter to RJC for funding in 2026" letter, it's a letter from us to you asking for your support. There is also a "DOC Long-term Planning Letter to RJC 2026" letter asking DOC to stop moving forward to build a new OSP. We're asking at this time for \$4.3M to keep program in tact until budget is better.

Tristen: We are aware that that is happening.

Shannon: New director was shocked to see Oregon State Prison (OSP) and brought a proposal to legislature last session to get a feasibility study funded to help create a new OSP. PSJ engaged on that and said before you spend money, it takes 7-10 years to build a prison and won't meet medical needs of anyone incarcerated anytime soon, lets go back to the Justice Reinvestment Process instead.

Paul: This looks like an opportunity to look at the drivers and hold a build on the new OSP. Given current fiscal environment, looks like a billion dollar prison build would be a non-starter.

Shannon: We want some of the \$3.5M allocated to do this longer stakeholder engagement process. There's so much to consider but there's things like medical release or compassionate release. We can also look at things like shrinking prison system over the long term. We can move people into the facilities where their needs can be met. We need projections that are looking at sentencing reforms, etc. the fact that we don't have any earned time sad. We need a comprehensive plan. we are in a productive conversation with Director and Valerie in the Governor's Office to halt money to engage stakeholder process and would appreciate your support in the need to move ahead.

Tristen: How can we be helpful around this. Curious about at this point in time, where should we direct our advocacy – should it be towards legislators, engage more with DOC or GO? What's the best in the immediate as the best approach.

Shannon: We'd love RJC official endorsement on moving forward with stakeholder process and not a new prison. At this point the pressure is probably best from you (committee) going to the Governor and DOC for the stakeholder processes.

Over long term we'd love to have more conversations with you on interim legislative advocacy. Legislator education is so important – has to be constant and consistent since they have so much going on. Would love to be back in 2026 on some of our work.

Tristen: We can touch in with Valerie. What I think is taking your letter, adapting it so it addresses Governor and Mike Reese. Is sending it now good?

Shannon: Yes

Tristen: If you had to give us three talking points, what's the message you'd like us to get across

Shannon: Let me send you something and thinking about the main JRI that helps reach the entire state. These are the hardest groups being hit by the cuts. Outcomes have been good so far.

Tristen: You can send me more talking points if you want.

Paul: Is there a specific legislative process in pulling back that \$500K?

Shannon: Don't really know, need to talk to Valerie more about it. Don't know how we get some of that POP to get to CJC to help manage that process.

Valerie: Trying to figure out where staff and AIC's to get the support they need. Also directing DOC to move forward with feasibility study but also engage with stakeholders and what the alternatives are. Focusing on geriatric and medical care that needs to be ensured. DOC may not be the right place when we talk about criminal justice reform and legislators having this conversation. Director Reese will be here next month as

	<p>well to share more information on the process and answer questions.</p> <p>Tristen: Has there been conversation on compassion release to relieve that need?</p> <p>Valerie: We have limited laws on that, it will need to be a broader conversation. What are the elements and needs for that.</p> <p>Paul: Trying to think outside of stakeholder engagement process, prior to HB2994 put together public safety taskforce charged it taking look at how we avoid a future prison bill (at that time a \$6M dollar cost)...</p> <p>Valerie: We're talking about an internal Governor's Office process or asking for the Governor's Office to do an executive order task force? I haven't brought that request to the governor to see if at this point in time we have capacity. The concerns I have is with the budget reductions, even our office is having to take on certain reductions. Still needing to have maybe an outside or to facilitate that. Happy to take that back to governor.</p> <p>Shannon: We will need legislative buy in either having members on the taskforce, or other ideas.</p>	
Update on Bills of Interest—Valerie Colas	<p>Valerie: There are only four bills entered into OLIS as of now. There may be more bills I need to review but we wanted to focus on any bills that widen the criminal justice web. There are about 365 bills for short session, with that so far I have identified at least seven that fall under your interest. Do have a chart I can send, but will wait till Wednesday to ensure its up to date. Capturing bill number, LC and short summary. Once it's available, will insert the link so you can see that language too.</p> <p>Rep Kropf - HB 4041 – requires recording of prestation and facts of corporate by grand jury. Removes requirement of state to pleads guilty or no contest.</p> <p>Paul: Very helpful framing. The Torrez Lopez time served is a big deal. Will be curious to see how this unfolds.</p> <p>Valerie: If its something the committee wants to look into, want to ensure there is a notice and due process procedure – just something you may want to see as you advocate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HB 4089: Theft can also include wage claim theft but doesn't preclude individual for looking for other ways for people to get their wages paid. Carried by Rep Tran. 	

- HB 4096: Creates crime of aggravated felon in possession of a firearm.
- HB 4101: Increases sentencing guidelines for felony fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer.
- HB 4140: Modifies the crime of criminal mischief in the first degree by expanding the types of telecommunications entities whose property may be subject to ORS 164.365.
- HB 4151: Crime of initiating false report, that results in fiscal injury or death.
- SB 1530: Expands crime of aggravated harassment to include threats concerning public officials in specified circumstances.

Tristen: Mariana drafted a bill to support Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) priorities. Would love to see:

1. By Wednesday, what are bills moving forward to protect immigrants. Would like to get the process done so we can get the letter moving forward.
2. Requesting volunteer to draft letter on opposing criminal code and expanding crimes. Sterling wrote a letter last session, could easily be adapted to bills for this session.

I don't have capacity to write this letter. Would really appreciate a volunteer.

Mariana: I can do that since I'm working on the other one.

Tristen: This is a continuing priority for us. It gave broad policy arguments and bullet pointed bills we talked about. You are welcome to change it however you want. I can send you that letter.

Mariana: I'll be getting additional info on OIRA priorities, bills, etc. ----

Tristen Will be in the car on Friday but you can call me and we can talk through it.

Other two things would like to see is the anti-prison bill letter adapted so its from us to the Governor and Mike Reese. Looking at Babak to do this, will need to send to Andre, Valerie, and Javier to review. not a typical letter for legislators.

Adapt JREP letter – which would be letter to legislator. Would be good to have them by Monday so we can get ball rolling. Session is short and legislative letters have to go through several layers of review. Please have them done by Monday.

	<p>Javier: All letters will need to be done and in OLIS by the 16th. copy me in a separate email and can report back to Andre and Valerie that It went in. Whomever is drafting the letter will need to upload to OLIS.</p>	
Advocacy Discussion	<p>Tristen: Sat in with a few legislative convos. Been saying that from our perspective as CJRC, encouraging them to remember that even if there's no social expansion, as we add new crimes we are expanding criminal system its incredibly expensive. These are budget issues even if there no fiscal attached. Thers a huge budget problem between county and state govt's.</p> <p><i>Meeting concludes 12:02pm</i></p>	

Meeting Materials	 PDF	 PDF	 PDF
	DOC Long-term Planning Letter to RJ for funding in 2026.pdf	JREP Letter to RJC	OIRA Priorities_Draft Letter.pdf

Zoom Chat

11:02:28 From Javier Cervantes, Gov. Office (El, He, Him, His) to Hosts and panelists:

CJRC Agenda Off-Month Committee Meeting Monday, January 26 11 AM-12 PM

1. Welcome
2. Presentation from Partnership for Safety and Justice: Insights of a Possible New OSP Facility—Shannon Wight
3. Update on Bills of Interest—Valerie Colas
4. Advocacy Discussion

Request for the Governor's Racial Justice Council's Support for a Long-Term Plan for Oregon's Correctional Footprint.

Since 2013 and the passage of HB 3194 (Justice Reinvestment), Oregon has committed to a smaller correctional footprint through smart, safe and sensible reforms that have prevented the need to open two prisons and allowed for the closure of two facilities. Prisons are the least effective and most expensive public safety tool. Especially during the current economic downturn, Oregon needs to best steward our resources to create safety, hold people accountable, and invest in the resources people convicted of crime and crime survivors need to thrive.

The Oregon Department of Corrections faces multiple challenges, including having one of the oldest prison populations in the country whose medical needs are difficult and expensive to meet, aging facilities, prisons in remote locations that struggle with staff and forced overtime, a workforce whose health and wellness are suffering, and information technology that is grossly outdated.

In light of the challenges of the elderly and medically infirm prisoners, DOC has requested and received funds in the 2025 legislative session to begin planning for a potential new Oregon State Penitentiary. While this might solve one issue, many others will still exist even if a new prison is built.

Instead of continuing on this narrow path, we request support from the Governor's Racial Justice Council for conducting a broad, long term planning process similar to the data driven and stakeholder engagement that led to HB 3194. By creating a long term, comprehensive plan, Oregon DOC and the legislature can work together to create the best outcomes for AICs and staff alike, and get the best return on our limited investments.

Attached to this request are a letter from members (current and recent past) from the Public Safety Subcommittee of Ways and Means to its co-chairs expressing support for this longer term process that includes a data-driven, stakeholder engaged process.

Submitted by Partnership for Safety and Justice

WILLY CHOTZEN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 46



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Dear Senator Broadman and Representative Evans,

All Oregonians, including those in custody, deserve to be safe and healthy. We recognize that the conditions within the Oregon State Penitentiary (OSP) sometimes put these values we all share at risk. This is part of the reason why the Public Safety Subcommittee approved the policy option package (POP) enabling the Department of Corrections (DOC) to determine what the appropriate next steps for the facility should be.

As was shared on the record during the work session on the Department's budget bill, the approval of the POP came with expectations and hopes that community stakeholders, victims, adults-in-custody (AICs), and prison staff would be consulted as part of this process. Such stakeholder engagement should ideally happen prior to any contractor being selected to conduct the study that will ultimately help the Legislature make future decisions about the fate of OSP, Oregon's overall correctional footprint, and the best ways to improve outcomes for the people most impacted by the criminal justice system.

Oregon is entering a challenging budget cycle, and over the next several biennia, funding will be severely limited. Given the difficulties that our Legislature is about to face, we will all need to be prepared with multiple options that we can pursue that will improve outcomes for AICs and staff within OSP and beyond, and ensure fiscal responsibility of taxpayer dollars. Such a process will ensure our Legislature can work on implementing positive system change over the next several years while our revenue streams struggle. Without such engagement happening before a process is committed to, we risk omitting important ideas and options that deserve consideration by the agency and Legislature alike that could best serve AICs, victims, staff and the community.

When Oregon last faced a budgetary issue similar to this one, the state initiated a "reset" that resulted in a report recommending a variety of legislative, agency, and other solutions that helped solve the problem without immediate reliance on significant expenditures. An outside group with expertise in this type of research and analysis partnered with the executive branch to conduct this study and engagement process, and that is exactly what we are hoping for now.

Given these budgetary constraints and our hope for a robust stakeholder engagement process that can present the Legislature with options on how to solve these issues, our offices request that the Public Safety Subcommittee work with the Department of Corrections to either pause or postpone:

- 1.) Any negotiations with contractors to conduct a construction or site-planning specific option feasibility study;**
- 2.) Any current stakeholder engagement process so an adequately resourced, inclusive and comprehensive process can be developed.**

We understand the importance of the moment and the deteriorating conditions at OSP, and believe it's critical for the Legislature to understand all of the options available to protect staff and AICs alike during this time of budgetary uncertainty.

Yours and the agency's dedication to protecting the health and safety of AICs and staff is appreciated, and we look forward to continuing to work together over the years to come.

Sincerely,

Sen. Wlnsvey Campos
Rep. Willy Chotzen
Rep. Farrah Chaichi
Rep. Travis Nelson

Request for the Governor's Racial Justice Council's Support for Justice Reinvestment Program (JREP) funding in 2026 (\$4.3 million)

All Oregonians deserve to feel truly safe in their communities. But for too many communities of color across our state, such a reality feels too far to reach. Oregon has made some strides in reducing some of the barriers but many communities continue to be underserved and there are additional ways that our state must remedy historic inequities and invest in true community safety for all. One of those ways is through the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program (JREP).

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed HB 3194, which created the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI). This program invested millions into nonprofits and county governments across the state to reduce our reliance on Oregon's state prison systems. Over the past twelve years, JRI has prevented the need for our state to open new prisons and has kept the criminal justice system's growth in check by investing in critical programs including housing, behavioral health, and treatment instead of prison beds.

While JRI has had a significant impact on our state, a 2019 report by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission found:¹

Culturally specific providers are the preferred delivery model for servicing historically underserved communities. Currently, however, the use of culturally specific providers within JRI is rare. Culturally-specific providers traditionally have been excluded from consideration for JRI treatment subcontracts and victim services allocations—a reflection of institutional and systemic barriers.

The lack of existing investment into these organizations prompted the creation brought forward by the Transforming Justice Coalition, with strong leadership from then Speaker of House Kotek, of the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program through the passage of SB 1510 in the 2022 legislative session.

JREP is an essential component of JRI, and one should not be funded without the other. But, JREP was unfortunately not refunded during the 2025 legislative session. JRI is a critical public safety program in Oregon and JREP ensures it reaches historically underserved communities.

Communities of color are the most harmed and least helped by the justice system. A 2023 report by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Council on State Governments found that Black Oregonians are on supervision at 3 times the rate of white residents, and incarcerated at a rate 5

¹ <https://www.oregon.gov/cjc/CJC%20Document%20Library/HB3064ReportSept2020.pdf>. P. 28

times higher. These rates are similar for victims of color who experience harm at higher rates.² These disparities cannot be addressed without investment in communities that we know are effective and reducing crime and violence.

NW Health Foundation, in partnership with CJC, and with capacity building assistance from the Latino Coalition for Community Leadership, distributed \$10 million to 18 culturally-specific organizations covering 24 counties across the state that provide housing and reentry services for those leaving incarceration, victim and survivor assistance, and other upstream investments designed to prevent contact with the criminal justice system.

We respectfully request that you support an investment of \$4.3 million for the Justice Reinvestment Equity Program. Such continued investment will allow for organizations that are making Oregon safer and more equitable to continuing serving those in need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Submitted by Partnership for Safety and Justice

²https://justicereinvestmentinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Oregon-Criminal-Justice-Data-Snapshot_accessible.pdf pp 30-34

January 22, 2026

RJC- Criminal Justice Reform Committee

DRAFT LETTER RE: Support for SB476, LC 218, and comprehensive immigration packet.

This letter comes to you from the Criminal Justice Reform Committee of the Racial Justice Council, a diverse group of individuals who represent the interests of Oregonians across the state who are facing increased threats from the federal government's aggressive and inhumane strategy on immigration and deportations. Immigration issues are deeply important to our committee as we are aware both of the disproportionate impact that criminal processes can have on non-citizens and of the racist rhetoric employed by the federal government to characterize immigrants as criminals and spread xenophobic attitudes. We are aware that people across the state, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, are extremely troubled by the federal government's assault on the immigrant members of our community. We write this letter to voice our support for the bills and budget items that provide an opportunity for the state to advance protections for immigrants this session.

We are writing to express strong support for the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA)'s priority bills for the upcoming short legislative session. We collectively support the package of immigration related proposals being considered for the 2026 short legislative session. Together, these measures reflect Oregon's continued commitment to civil rights, public safety, data privacy, and consistent policy implementation across public systems.

Many of the individuals our committee members serve and represent live in fear and uncertainty tied to immigration enforcement. In the face of worsening realities, we acknowledge the households impacted and their lived experiences, which are marked by circumstances that pose serious risks to their families, household stability, health, and overall well-being. Oregon's sanctuary laws were enacted specifically to protect local resources and uphold constitutional principles of separation of power. It behooves Oregon State leaders to enact policies that serve to respond to the expanded immigration enforcement by the federal government and protect Oregonians.

We urge you to use your authority to adopt stronger protections for immigrants who interact with public institutions, including safeguarding their personally sensitive data in light of a federal court decision permitting immigration authorities to access such information. Given the rapidly shifting legal landscape, implementation of the Community Privacy Data Act is a critical safeguard that limits indirect cooperation with federal enforcement while reinforcing the need

for precise, statewide data and public safety protocols. In the realm of public safety, Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement (OIRA) is uniquely poised to develop an equity-informed model standard for public bodies to implement and update internally.

Moreover, we ask that the Legislature continue to support the implementation of SB 476, which includes affirming OIRA's authority to approve culturally responsive training developed by licensing boards and to publish straightforward, plain-language guidance for internationally educated professionals navigating Oregon's licensure systems. Immigrants are a powerful force for community stability and renewal. They reinvigorate neighborhoods and business corridors, boost our tax base, and enrich our cultural landscape while filling essential roles across industries.

Relatedly, we support LC 218, the Senate Education bill, which maintains access and enrollment protections while directing the Oregon Department of Justice to develop model policies in coordination with OIRA and the Oregon School Boards Association using existing resources.

To conclude, we appreciate your work to adopt stronger protections for immigrants by supporting legislation that advances equity, protects civil rights, and strengthens statewide coordination among immigrants and refugee systems. As we make these recommendations, we also ask for greater cooperation with community partners and agencies to ensure cohesive community care in the face of uncertainty. Your assertive action today in adopting a comprehensive immigration package will prevent harm and pain to vulnerable Oregonians.

Your leadership in this moment matters.

With respect and resolve,

CJRC