

Kate Brown
Governor



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Testimony in support, HB 4131
House Committee on Judiciary
Wednesday, February 5, 2020, Hearing Room E at 1 pm

Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chairs Bynum and Sprenger, and members of the Committee,

I am Maura Kelly, a Commissioner for the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW). The Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW), and the Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islanders (OCAPIA), Black Affairs (OCBA), and Hispanic Affairs (OCHA) ask the committee for support for HB 4131, which would fund the Family Preservation Project, a vital program that provides support to incarcerated women and their families.

The Family Preservation Project (FPP) supports incarcerated mothers and their families in Oregon with therapeutic visitations, transition planning, classes, support groups, and other resources. This program ensures healthy mother-child relationships are maintained during incarceration and provides essential help with planning for the transition back into the community. HB 4131 provides \$650,000 in funding per biennium through 2027. This investment will allow the FPP to address these critical needs of incarcerated women and their families.

In Oregon, 80% of women who are incarcerated are mothers. The trauma of incarceration poses serious threats to both mothers and their families. Children who have incarcerated mothers are more likely to be placed into foster care and more likely to be incarcerated themselves in their lifetime. These children often suffer in their mental health, social behavior and their educational outcomes. However, the FPP can reduce these risks. The Family Preservation Project is a proven model for strengthening families by helping to reduce the harm of parental incarceration. It has already impacted the lives of thousands of Oregon mothers and children.

Sufficient and stable funding of the FPP will ensure these families get the help they need and reduce the trauma experienced by children of incarcerated mothers. The Oregon Advocacy Commissions urge the committee to support HB 4131.

Sincerely,

Maura Kelly
OCFW Commissioner

Robin Morris Collin
OCFW Chair

OR Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs

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Mohamed Alyajouri, Co-Chair
Bennie Moses Mesubed, Vice Chair
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Senator Michael Dembrow
Representative Carla Piluso

OR Commission on Black Affairs

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OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs

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OR Commission for Women

Robin Morris Collin, Chair
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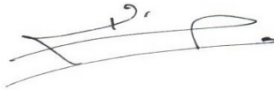
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OCBA



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