

# Oregon Voices News

*News from Oregon that you can use*

## **Oregon Voices Supports Justice, Fairness, and Rational Laws**

Oregon Voices is committed to justice and rationality in policies regarding sex offenses and will continue to work toward supporting legislation that will positively impact the lives of registered citizens and their families. OV strives to provide up-to-date information about such things as seeking relief from the registry and Oregon's use of the Static-99R to establish classification risk levels.

We will continue to support the efforts of other organizations that are also striving to make lives better for AICs and for those reentering our communities. One such group on the national level is the Council of State Governments and the other is Oregon's Partnership for Safety and Justice (PSJ). We are encouraged to witness the work that PSJ is doing in the areas of mental health, prison reform, and re-entry. Just today, this organization is reaching out to OV members as well as others to support its efforts in seeing that SB581 passes during this legislative session. This bill would require the Department of Corrections to adopt rules requiring supervising officers to provide to eligible persons on supervision quarterly updates on progress toward earning reduction in supervision.

This newsletter highlights other news and events that indicate positive support for RCs, AICs, and others!

## **People Convicted By Nonunanimous Juries in Oregon Have the Right to a New Trial**

"Hundreds Serving Time in Oregon Prisons Eligible for New Trial, State Supreme Court Says" is a story produced by Allison Frost for OPB's Think Out Loud program broadcasted on Jan. 4, 2023 9:20 a.m. and updated: Jan. 11, 2023 2:34 p.m.

At the beginning of the broadcast, Dave Miller gave the following overview:

"The Oregon Supreme Court has ruled that people convicted by nonunanimous juries have the right to a new trial. Before the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the practice of convicting defendants with less than a unanimous jury, Oregon and Louisiana were the

only states that allowed it. The justices left it to those states to decide whether or not the ruling applied retroactively to those already convicted.”

OPB reporter Conrad Wilson who covers criminal justice and legal affairs joined Dave in order to explain more about the ruling and what happens next. It is an informative interview and if you are interested, you can still listen to this Think Out Loud broadcast: <https://www.opb.org/article/2023/01/04/non-unanimous-jury-oregon-law/>

## **OV Legislative Workgroup Hard At Work Tracking Bills**

The Legislative Workgroup follows bills in the Oregon legislature that impact the mission of Oregon Voices. Pam does an amazing job of reviewing pending legislation and bringing important bills to our attention. Our OV volunteers follow the bills and alert us of pending action and will be offering written or oral testimony when that is needed.

Ken recently noted three important bills that were in need of immediate attention. HB 2320 pertaining to the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission and the gathering of data on juvenile offenders will provide valuable information on young offenders going forward. Senate Bills 566 and 567 attempt to add clarity to the definition of certain types of sexual encounter. Ken noted in his supporting letter that education is an important factor in reducing unwanted sexual behavior.

There are many other interesting bills under consideration. The possibility of allowing AICs to vote has come up again this session. Increasing educational opportunities is included in two bills as well as improving health care while incarcerated. The related issue of compassionate release for old and frail inmates is being discussed. There is renewed interest in looking at alternative incarceration programs. These bills and more can be found on the very informative Oregon Legislative Information website <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/>. You can read about bills, follow a bill’s progress and comment on bills of interest to you.

The Workgroup always welcomes new volunteers. Please contact Scott if you would like more information. He can be reached via the OV email address listed at the end of this newsletter.

## **A New Website Offers Resources to Safely Divert People From the Justice System and Increase Access to Mental Health Treatment**

As a result of President Joe Biden signing the **Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Reauthorization Act**, The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs' Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), launched a new website for the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program (JMHCP). From free, on-demand training to crisis response consultation and issue-specific webinars, articles, and publications, behavioral health and justice partners now have easy access to resources that can help them connect people to services and promote public safety while reducing unnecessary contact with the criminal justice system.

The website is very new but it will be a good one to follow as more and more resources will be added. Be sure to check it out: <https://jmhcp.org/>

### **The Director of Person-Centered Services at the Washington State Department Of Corrections Seeks a Public Health–Based Approach to Addressing Addiction**

It is always good to stay informed about positive changes that are happening in nearby states such as Washington and California. On a recent Sunday Today Show (1/15/23), NBC's Harry Smith interviewed Chris Poulos who is the director of Person-Centered Services at the Washington State Department of Corrections. Poulos supports a public health-based approach to addressing addiction and works to rehabilitate rather than incarcerate those who are addicted.

There are 15 hundred state prisons, 100 federal lock-ups, and several thousand state jails and juvenile detention facilities in the United States today. Together there are over 2 million incarcerated individuals in these facilities. Smith is quick to point out that even though the goal of prisons is to provide punishment and rehabilitation, they lean heavily on the first and very little is done in relation to the latter. The video is well worth watching.

[https://www.today.com/video/formerly-incarcerated-man-now-leading-prison-reform-159943749954?mc\\_cid=2ecff9df5b&mc\\_eid=cc97dfb527](https://www.today.com/video/formerly-incarcerated-man-now-leading-prison-reform-159943749954?mc_cid=2ecff9df5b&mc_eid=cc97dfb527)

It is also alarming that, excluding federal prisoners, as of January 2023, the incarceration rate of the United States is the sixth highest in the world. During the last few years, there has been an effort to decrease the numbers of those imprisoned. OV can feel good knowing that Oregon is one of those states attempting to lower its prison populations as well.

### **The OV Relief Handbook Nears Completion**

The Relief Handbook is a publication that OV will soon make available to help people who are seeking relief from registration through the Parole Board. It will be a starting place for people to learn how this process works and how to go about getting records. It is

presently going through final editing and formatting before it is printed and ready for distribution. OV board members plan to present sample pages of this document at the February General Meeting and those in attendance will have an opportunity to ask questions.

If you are a registered citizen and wonder if you are eligible to apply for relief, please check out the flow chart on the OV website. If you have further questions, contact OV for assistance. <https://www.oregonvoices.org/>

## **Fearless Oregon Welcomes You!**

Fearless groups are active in several states across the country. By definition, a Fearless group is a place for those of us who are registrants and feel marginalized and ostracized by society.

It is a place to come together to share stories of hope and empowerment. It is a safe place to share our stories, educate each other, learn about advocacy, and our civil rights, and succeed and be successful despite the restraints placed on us. It is a place to connect and make new friends.

The Fearless Oregon group began in March 2022 with three men who met once a month. We now average between ten and fifteen members. While the majority of participants are from Oregon, there are also regulars from Idaho, Washington, and Utah.

The Fearless Oregon group meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm PST. Everyone is allowed to speak, or just listen. We are not a therapy group, and no psychological advice is offered. In addition, we do not offer legal advice. However, we will offer a referral if one is needed.

All meetings are conducted via Zoom. Everyone is welcome: Registrants, spouses, partners, family members, friends, or supporters! Come join us for camaraderie and a safe place to talk. If anyone has questions or would like further information, you can contact David via the OV email address or phone number found at the end of this newsletter, as he would be happy to respond to any inquiries.

## **Village Resources Offers Mentoring Support**

According to their website, Village Resources is a non-profit organization whose primary focus is “to provide eligible individuals, released from Oregon State Correctional Facilities, support and resources designed to mitigate the barriers to successful transition, as well as support pro-social thinking by modeling, and addressing criminal thinking behaviors.” It promises to be another useful resource for RCs.

<https://villageresources.org/our-programs/mentoring-support/>

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Oregon Voices thanks the artist-in-residence (housed on the inside) who contributed these incredible sketches of family pets.



Emmie



Irie



Auggie

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## *insiders' corner (cont'd)*

### **Call for Submissions:**

*The newsletter is soliciting contributions of artwork, poetry, or short pieces up to 250 words for inclusion in future newsletters. You don't have to be an AIC in Oregon. Remember that some Oregon AICs are housed out of state in military detention facilities or federal prisons. Your artistic contributions are also welcome. We reserve the right to edit pieces to fit the constraints of the newsletter, and when possible, we will consult with authors about proposed changes. We would like to continue to feature the voices of our readers who are on the inside.*

### **Animals Go Ape for Banana Plant Trimmings at the Portland Zoo**

As you may already know, the Oregon State Correctional Institution (OSCI) has been growing novelty banana plants for the enjoyment of visitors, staff, and AICs. Twice a year these plants need to be trimmed as well as thinned out and rather than throw out the discarded leaves, stalks and small fruit, they donate them to the Oregon Zoo. The blog on the DOC's website states that while the large leaves are intended for elephants, many other animals like the orangutans, polar bears, and goats like the rest of the goodies.

This past December, the AICs at OSCI were able to supply the Zoo with approximately three yards of trimmings from these banana plants! That's amazing! Check out the following link to see photos of some of the animals at the zoo enjoying these special treats!

<https://docblog.oregon.gov/2023/01/27/portlands-zoo-animals-go-wild-for-banana-plants>

Also, thanks to the DOC for creating its Blog website in order to feature such amazing stories and artwork completed by adults who are on the "inside".

### **Biden Signs Bill to Ease Costs for Prisoner Calls to Family**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden recently signed into law a bill aimed at easing the cost for prisoners to call family and friends.

The legislation clarifies that the Federal Communications Commission, which regulates interstate and international communications through cable, radio, television, satellite and wire, can set limits for fees on audio and video calls inside corrections facilities. Look for further information to follow.

<https://apnews.com/article/biden-politics-prisons-federal-communications-commission-business-db8ac8d18fcbf34fdf966255e39fcd2e>



## **What's Up With Oregon's Real ID Driver's Licenses?**

In past newsletters, articles were included about the Real ID Driver's License. A significant effort was made to explain what it was, how it was different from the regular driver's license, and why we needed to apply for one.

The deadline was set for April 27, 2020 then it was extended to October 1, 2021, later to May 3, 2023 and now, just recently to May 7, 2025! The pandemic was cited as the reason for this delay. The means you can still board a plane without having to have a Real ID Driver's License!

As required by law, following this new enforcement deadline, federal agencies, including the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), will be prohibited from accepting driver's licenses and identification cards that do not meet these federal standards.

If you would like to learn more about Oregon's Real ID Driver's License, you can visit the Oregon Department of Transportation Website. There is information about understanding the Real ID Act, Real ID-compliant Driver's Licenses, and Enhanced Driver's Licenses. There is also a Frequently Asked Questions page that is very thorough.

## **Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE)**

CURE is a grassroots organization that was founded in Texas in 1972. It became a national organization in 1985. The mission of Oregon CURE is to reduce crime by advocating for affective criminal justice policies, procedures, and programs.

There are four CURE support groups around the state and any one of them would welcome your participation. Their newsletter always contains valuable information that AICs and RCs can use. There is a small membership fee in order to receive the newsletter but it is well worth it.

The Eugene CURE support group is well organized and is very fortunate to have a member who sends out an email each month reminding people of the meeting date. She always includes lots of valuable resources that she collects each month. In fact, I am forwarding two of the links that she sent to her CURE folks because I am sure that some of you will find them very informative.

Here is a link to a You Tube video on how to get any money back from Corrlinks once you no longer use it. <https://youtu.be/jVMsHmUmNus>

Here is a report on the changes in Medicare for those who are 65 or older (or turn 65) in custody. If you scroll down, it has steps for those in custody to take.  
<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2023/01/03/medicare-part-b/>

Please visit the CURE website for more information: <https://oregoncure.org/>

## **Have Questions? Need Information? Check Out the OV Website!**

Remember to visit the OV Website as it contains a wealth of information. The home page features a column on the right-hand side that gives information about current issues and events. The newly revised OV brochure will be added soon. Contact information is provided if you have some news items that you wish to contribute or if you have any questions. [www.oregonvoices.org](http://www.oregonvoices.org)

## **Come Join Us At Our Next General Meeting**

Mark your calendars! Oregon Voices will be holding a General meeting on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at Hilltop Community Church in Oregon City, 592 Molalla Ave, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Please do join us! The most valuable part of our meeting will be providing you with some unstructured time to visit and eat.

Board members have also planned to include a short agenda that will include: A legislative update, an explanation of the implications/outcomes of the latest SORNA lawsuit, the latest information about the Relief Handbook along with sample copies of a few pages, and the distribution of the newly revised OV brochure.

Please remember that no children can be present at the meetings because of probation restrictions placed on some of our registered citizens.

## **Last, But Not Least**

Oregon Voices is committed to working with other organizations within our state that share a common goal of creating better support for our registered citizens and their families. We invite you to join us in our efforts. Help is always needed to work on such issues as housing, employment, education, legal resources, the website, legislation and the OV newsletter. If you would like more information about Oregon Voices or wish to volunteer in some capacity, please call 971-317-6868, or email: [info@oregonvoices.org](mailto:info@oregonvoices.org)

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