

JOHN A. KITZHABER, MD
GOVERNOR



September 10, 2014

Dear Public Safety Leaders,

Since the signing of HB 3194 into law we've proven that with a collaborative and local approach to our public safety resource issues we can make gains in the face of tough economic conditions. The great work being done on the ground by the men and women in your communities is a testament to what can be accomplished when Oregonians work together. Today, a little over one year from the effective date of HB 3194, Oregon's prison population hovers around 14,600, and we are poised to capture savings that would have otherwise been spent on beginning the process of building a new prison. Simultaneously, according to Uniform Crime Reporting data, statewide violent and property crime rates remain at historical lows.

As the next biennium approaches, each community around the state begins to consider how best to invest increased justice reinvestment dollars into its local public safety system. Oregon has been offered an opportunity to apply for technical assistance and support. The assistance offered by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) will work with up to 6 counties to map their local public safety system and collect and use data to inform decision makers. Yamhill County has already begun this critical work with NIC, and other counties have undertaken a similar process on their own. Common to all this work it has become clear that better information allows decision makers to make better decisions.

Evidence Based Decision Making (EBDM) is not a model or a program, as it has no content and does not tell counties what to do. Rather, EBDM is a framework of support that helps local jurisdictions to select their own strategies to inform decision-making at key points in the local public safety system (e.g. victims' rights notification and participation, mental health diversion, arrest, pretrial release, community corrections, prison/jail re-entry etc.). The work's primary focus is on preventing victimization within our communities. The framework is based on four central principles:

1. The professional judgment of criminal justice system decision makers is enhanced when informed by evidence-based knowledge.
2. Every point of interaction in the justice system offers an opportunity for harm reduction.
3. Systems achieve better outcomes when they operate collaboratively.
4. The criminal justice system will continually learn and improve when professionals make decisions based on the collection, analysis, and use of data and information.

Local Public Safety Coordinating Councils (LPSCC) around the state will soon be getting together to write grant applications for the 2015/2016 Justice Reinvestment money created by HB 3194. As your county considers where best to augment community safety with innovative and informed public safety programs, I encourage you to submit an application for this additional assistance from NIC. If you would like an application packet or you would like a member from the state planning team to come and talk about EBDM with your LPSCC, please contact Craig Prins or Michael Schmidt at the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission before September 30, by email (Craig.PRINS@oregon.gov or Michael.SCHMIDT@oregon.gov) or by phone (503) 378-4830.

Sincerely,



Heidi Moawad, Public Safety Policy Advisor, Governor's Office
&

Judge Collins, Circuit Court Presiding Judge, Yamhill County

Judge Frantz, Circuit Court Judge, Multnomah County

Jason Myers, Sherriff, Marion County

John Teague, Chief of Police, Keizer

Tim Colahan, District Attorney, Harney County

Doug Harclerod, Exec. Dir., Oregon District Attorneys Association

Greg Hazarabedian, Public Defender, Lane County

Jayne Downing, Mid Valley Women's Crisis Center, Salem

Helen O'Brien, Crime Victims' Rights Program, Oregon Department of Justice

Jeremiah Stromberg, Assistant Director Community Corrections, Dep. of Corrections

Ted Smietana, Community Corrections Director, Yamhill County

Steven Berger, Community Corrections Director, Washington County

Cheryl Ramirez, Exec. Dir., Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs

Mary Stern, Association of Oregon Counties

Craig Prins, Director, Oregon Criminal Justice Commission