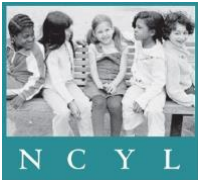




Juvenile  
Law Center



NATIONAL JUVENILE DEFENDER CENTER

Berkeley Law  
Policy Advocacy Clinic



June 15, 2021

Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE, Room H-178  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: Organizations Across the Country and Political Spectrum Support Eliminating Oregon's Juvenile Fees and Fines (Senate Bill 817)**

Dear Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and Rayfield, and Vice-Chairs Girod, Gomberg, and Smith:

As national organizations across the political spectrum, **we urge you to support passage of Senate Bill 817 (SB 817) this session by quickly moving the bill out of the Ways and Means Committee.**

Juvenile fees and fines – costs and monetary sanctions imposed on youth and families for the youth's involvement in the juvenile delinquency system – operate in part as a regressive tax on vulnerable Oregonians. Youth and their families are charged a range of fees, including for youth detention, probation supervision, and electronic monitoring. These charges come with harsh penalties and many negative consequences for nonpayment.

States from every region of the country are taking action to eliminate juvenile fees and fines. This year, Colorado, Louisiana, New Mexico, Texas, and Virginia have already passed legislation to reduce or eliminate fees and fines, following in the footsteps of California, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, Utah, and Washington. **Oregon has the opportunity to lead on this common-sense, bipartisan reform that will help youth and families by passing SB 817.**

Studies show that juvenile fees and fines create barriers for youth and families, trapping them in cycles of debt and court involvement. Further, fees and fines are linked to higher recidivism rates and lower positive social spending, undermining community safety and rehabilitation.

Jurisdictions consistently generate little to no net revenue from juvenile fees and fines, collecting them at low rates with high costs. Still, relying on system-involved youth and families to generate revenue creates a perverse incentive to entangle youth in the system. SB 817 would reduce the financial and bureaucratic burden on the agencies administering these programs while helping families. By ending juvenile fees and fines that only push youth deeper into the system, Oregon could see long-term fiscal savings.

Ending juvenile fees and fines is common-sense reform with bipartisan support, in Oregon and nationally. **We respectfully urge you to act today to ensure passage of SB 817.**

Sincerely,

Amy Miller, Executive Director  
**Youth, Rights & Justice**

Shana O'Toole, Founder & Director  
**Due Process Institute**

Lisa Foster & Joanna Weiss, Co-Directors  
**Fines and Fees Justice Center**

Carl Filler, State Policy Analyst  
**Justice Action Network**

Jessica Feerman, Senior Managing Director  
**Juvenile Law Center**

Lt. Diane Goldstein (Ret.), Executive Director  
**Law Enforcement Action Partnership**

Ronal Serpas, Executive Director  
**Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration**

Michael Harris, Senior Director for Juvenile Justice and Legal Advocacy  
**National Center for Youth Law**

Mary Ann Scali, Executive Director  
**National Juvenile Defender Center**

Stephanie Campos-Bui, Deputy Director  
**UC Berkeley Policy Advocacy Clinic**

Steven Greenhut, Western Region Director  
**R Street Institute**