



SENATOR FLOYD PROZANSKI

Senate District 4
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Senator Prozanski and Advocates Discuss the Need for Measure 11 Reform

SALEM – Earlier today, Senator Floyd Prozanski (D-Eugene), chair of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Implementation, held a Public Hearing [Senate Bill 401](#) and subsequently joined partner organizations to brief the press and answer questions on the proposed legislation.

“Today we heard from Oregonians, adults who have been in custody and experts on criminal justice reform. I believe we can do better to accomplish the goal of justice and a crucial step is changing an outdated law that works against reform,” said Senator Prozanski. “It’s become clearer than ever that this state believes in reformation over retribution and so do I.”

In addition, multiple District Attorneys spoke in support of Senate Bill 401 this morning, including Multnomah County District Attorney Mike Schmidt. “Senate Bill 401 is a tremendously important bill...For all of its importance, it is an incredibly easy bill to explain. It simply returns control over sentencing to judges,” said D.A. Schmidt. “They’re free to impose a harsher sentence when the circumstances require it, and a more lenient sentence when the defendant is deserving. They are free to treat these cases, in other words, the same way they treat all others – by weighing the facts, hearing from both sides, and making a fair and reasoned decision – the thing that they, and not we [District Attorneys], were elected to do,” added D.A. Schmidt.

Senior Lane County Circuit Court Judge Darryl Larson is also among urging the passage of Senate Bill 401, “Having been a Prosecutor for half my career, I understand why many prosecutors want to maintain Mandatory Minimums...It puts all the bargaining power in the hands of the prosecutor. This has led, in my opinion, to a very high likelihood of a number of innocent people doing prison time in Oregon.” Judge Larson added, “There is really no data that supports an argument that making the changes being proposed here [in Senate Bill 401] would have any effect to increase crime. The only thing being increased is – justice.”

Babak Zolfaghari-Azar is among the supporters of SB 401 and joined Senator Prozanski today. "Passing Senate Bill 401 will give the community hope that we can hold offenders accountable while having an equitable, humanizing, restorative and holistic justice system," he said.

Mr. Zolfaghari-Azar serves as a Community Healing Initiative (CHI) Family Care Manager for Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center + Rosemary Anderson High School (POIC + RAHS) "These Measure 11 reforms will allow us to invest in culturally specific and victim centered services. This is one critical step forward in restoring trust and showing the community that we are ready for a justice system centered around racial justice and humanity. For all of Oregon, especially for families of color, I support Senate Bill 401," added Mr. Zolfaghari-Azar.

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Measure 110 Implementation heard testimony on Senate Bill 401 this morning and will reconvene at 5:30pm this evening. Senate Bill 401 is scheduled for a Work Session on Wednesday, April 7 when the Committee meets at 8:00am.

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