

Oregon Youth Do Better with 'Second Look'

Why Support?

What would SB 682 do? Under Second Look, incarcerated youth who have served at least half of their sentence would have an opportunity to go back before a judge. **If the young person can demonstrate that he or she has made significant changes in his or her life since the original offense**, the judge may permit the youth to serve out the rest of the sentence in the community, under correctional supervision. The young person would still serve the remainder of his or her sentence, but under conditional release.

“Second Look” is an effective policy that is currently available to some youth and should be made available to all youth who are tried as adults.

Background

Oregon is the only state in the country that both automatically tries youth as adults and automatically sentences them to mandatory minimum sentences – eliminating any assessment of their individual circumstances.

Today, almost 40% of the youth who are currently incarcerated in Oregon are serving adult sentences. Making these youth eligible for Second Look hearings could save the state millions in unnecessary incarceration costs and is good policy. Youth who receive Second Look and are released have a better chance of living crime free than youth who do not.

According to polling conducted in March of 2009, 66% of registered voters in Oregon were in support of Second Look for youth who have been convicted as adults.

Smart public safety policies should hold convicted youth accountable and reduce recidivism. Crime harms survivors of crime and the community.

Let's get smart for our youth, and our future.

Youth Who Earn 'Second Look' Have Lower Recidivism Rates

- Oregon Department of Justice has tracked Second Look hearings since 1998. Between 1998 and 2008, there have been 307 hearings.
- In those hearings, about half (172) of the young people were granted conditional release.
- Department of Corrections (DOC) reports a recidivism rate of 17% for those who were granted conditional release under a Second Look, far below DOC's reported average recidivism rate of 31%.

Support SB 682

Numerous studies have found that trying youth as adults increases recidivism and does not deter crime.

Reports by the Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency (OJJDP) Prevention have conducted extensive surveys and research on the issue of youth being tried as adults and concluded that ***transfer to adult court increases recidivism for youth.***

Six large scale studies have been conducted on the deterrent effects of transfer...All of the studies found higher recidivism rates among offenders who had been transferred to criminal court, compared with those who were retained in the juvenile system.

- OJJDP (*Juvenile Transfer Laws, 2008*)

"The [CDC] Task Force conducted a systemic review to determine the validity of the theory that transferring youth to the adult criminal justice system deters youth from committing subsequent crimes...the Task Force recommends against laws and policies facilitating the transfer of juveniles from the juvenile justice to the adult judicial system for the purposes of reducing violence."

- CDC (*Effects on Violence, 2007*)

The following Oregon-based organizations have signed on to the Justice for Youth Campaign Resolution:

Coalition of Advocates for Equal Access for Girls
Janus Youth Programs
Juvenile Rights Project
Juvenile Services Division, Multnomah County Dept. of Community Justice
Oregon Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs
Oregon Criminal Defense Attorneys Association
Oregon Public Health Association
Partnership for Safety and Justice
SEIU, Local 503
Southern Oregon Adolescent Program
Stand for Children