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**Testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee
In Support of HB2021
March 8, 2023**

Chair Warren and Committee Members:

Our associations have repeatedly acknowledged the juvenile justice system amendments were working well for most juvenile offenders and having the desired positive results. However, we also have voiced concern over the system's shortfalls for repeat and very serious juvenile offenders. We believe prosecutors have also voiced concerns about this issue. We support HB2021 because it addresses these concerns.

One of the obstacles we often ran into was the absolute limits with hard caps for detention. This is addressed with amendments on page 10 lines 16 and 21 of the bill. It changes the limits from 45 days to 90 days. It also retains the requirement for a review every 7 days to consider the assigned detention time. This is reasonable and is a good start to fix this problem. We remain concerned that even these changes provide a hard end of detention even if the juvenile has clear indications they are not ready for release. We do not want to see unrestricted availability to extend detention time. However, it seems there should be some mechanism with a high bar and established criteria for the courts to consider extending beyond 90 days, with periodic mandatory reviews, in those rare cases where the juvenile is not ready for release. Especially when there is a reasonable finding the juvenile remains a significant risk to public safety or to reoffend.

We do note on page 13, lines 5, 23-25 and 30-31, amendments are made for probation periods which allows extended probation and overall case limits when clear circumstances occur and with limited incremental extensions. It is this type of ability to extend the detention limits that we believe would be helpful as described in the paragraph above.

We also recognize the improvements on Page 14, line 40, and page 15 lines 16-23, providing very limited detention for probation violations when the court finds it is necessary.

Beyond the above public safety concerns we addressed above, we also believe the amendments on page 17, line 41 through page 18, line 12, dealing with use of the funds may help local agencies develop programming needed to provide the services the expectations the modified laws anticipate.

We very much appreciate someone is finally listening to our concerns and working to find reasonable solutions to those concerns without modifying the many changes that have led to successes with the vast majority of juveniles in the system.

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