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## Youth, Rights & Justice Thanks Governor Brown For Signing Landmark Bill Eliminating Juvenile Fees and Fines in Oregon

**Salem, OR (07/23/21)** – Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed Senate Bill 817 (SB 817) into law on July 19th, 2021, enacting bipartisan reform that will help thousands of Oregonians by eliminating fees and fines charged to young people in the juvenile system and relieving vulnerable youth and their families of tens of millions of dollars in outstanding debt.

This landmark legislation makes Oregon the third state in the nation to completely eliminate juvenile fees and fines, following Maryland and New Mexico. Oregon is the sixth state this year and the twelfth state to reduce or eliminate juvenile fees as part of a growing movement across the country.

Senator James I. Manning Jr. (D-Eugene) and Representative Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro) introduced SB 817, which was championed by Youth, Rights & Justice and supported by groups including Our Children Oregon, Stand for Children Oregon, and the Oregon Justice Resource Center's Youth Justice Project. A coalition of national groups across the political spectrum also supported the bill, including the Justice Action Network, R Street, UC Berkeley Law's Policy Advocacy Clinic, and the Fines & Fees Justice Center.

"I am proud to have worked with a strong coalition of state agencies, non-profit organizations, and other key stakeholders who came together to end these harmful fees and realize this important step forward for Oregon youth and families," said Representative Sollman.

Current state law authorizes courts, probation departments, and the Oregon Youth Authority to charge administrative fees to children in the juvenile system and their parents. Families struggle to pay off these fees, fines, and costs totaling up to thousands of dollars. Black and Indigenous children are disproportionately harmed by Oregon's juvenile fees and fines. "I know from personal experience that eliminating juvenile fees and fines will lift a mental and emotional burden on families in Oregon. We don't need to push kids and families further into the system, we need to help them do well," said Siobhan Cancél, Volunteer Leader of the Lane County Chapter of Stand for Children Oregon.

Research shows that fines and fees strain family relationships, fall disproportionately on youth of color, and increase recidivism. Karen Cain, who was charged high fees for her son's commitment to the Oregon Youth Authority, added, "My family had to deal with these fees for nearly 20 years. I'm so relieved that no one else will have to experience that financial and emotional distress."



Legislative efforts in Oregon and elsewhere are supported by [Debt Free Justice Campaign](#), a national initiative to abolish fees and fines imposed on youth and their families. For more information on how SB 817 may impact you or your agency, please contact Youth, Rights & Justice at [info@youthrightsjustice.org](mailto:info@youthrightsjustice.org).

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