A Proposal for Civilian-Led Intervention, Independent Oversight, and Community Accountability

A Research-Based Public Safety Initiative

Proposed pilot program and long-term public safety model

Central Oregon | Initial development proposal

The Problem: Taxpayers Are Funding the Harm—And Then Paying to Fix It

Communities spend enormous amounts of public money on law enforcement, courts, incarceration, emergency medical services, mental health interventions, and homelessness response.

But what happens when the very systems funded to protect the public contribute to creating or escalating the crises they are subsequently paid to resolve?

The taxpayers pay for the harm. Then the taxpayers pay again to repair it.

- **Mental Health Escalation:** When a person experiencing a mental health crisis is repeatedly arrested rather than connected to appropriate care, the public pays for each police response, court proceeding, jail stay, and subsequent intervention.
- **Cycles of Instability:** When someone experiencing homelessness becomes trapped in a cycle of citations, incarceration, instability, and emergency services, taxpayers finance every stage of that cycle.
- **Institutional Harm:** When an individual suffers preventable harm through misconduct, institutional failures, or inappropriate interventions, additional publicly funded services may become necessary to address the consequences.
- **Duplicate Burden on Charities:** And when existing institutions fail to provide adequate support, communities are often left to establish charities and nonprofit organizations to help people recover from problems that taxpayer-funded systems may have contributed to creating.

Why should communities have to establish entirely new organizations to protect people from potential failures of institutions they already pay to protect them?

This is the contradiction at the center of our proposal.

We believe public safety deserves a different approach—one that measures not only the cost of responding to emergencies, but also the cost of preventable harm, ineffective intervention, and repeated institutional involvement.

Our proposed initiative will investigate these costs, document outcomes, and develop a civilian-led alternative focused on preventing harm rather than repeatedly paying to respond to its consequences. We intend to examine where this cycle occurs, what it costs, and what changes when people receive timely support.

1. Executive Summary

This proposal outlines the development of an independent, research-driven public safety initiative that combines three essential functions:

1. **Civilian-Led Peer Support and Early Intervention**
2. **Independent Local Government Oversight**
3. **Data Collection, Research, and Public Policy Development**

The long-term objective is to demonstrate the feasibility of an alternative public safety model that could eventually receive state funding and become an established component of community public safety infrastructure.

Rather than relying exclusively on traditional enforcement-based responses, the proposed model emphasizes prevention, community advocacy, civilian crisis intervention, and meaningful accountability.

The initiative will begin on a limited scale, prioritizing incarcerated individuals who lack family, friends, or other meaningful outside support. Through direct assistance, independent observation, and systematic documentation, the pilot program will gather evidence about the barriers these individuals face, the public resources involved in their cases, and the potential benefits of earlier intervention.

Our ultimate goal is to present policymakers with a practical, measurable public safety model capable of being expanded, funded, and potentially adopted by government.

Our first priority is the people no one is watching out for.

2. Our Mission

To develop and demonstrate a civilian-led public safety model that protects vulnerable individuals, prevents unnecessary institutional harm, improves accountability, and reduces the financial and human costs of repeated crisis intervention.

We seek to accomplish this through direct peer support, independent monitoring of local government practices, and research designed to identify better uses of public safety resources.

Our work will emphasize protecting individuals who lack the resources, representation, or personal support networks necessary to navigate complex public institutions.

3. The Initial Pilot Program: Starting with People Who Have No One

A Focused Approach to a Much Larger Problem

The initiative will begin by assisting a limited number of incarcerated individuals, with priority given to those who have no meaningful outside support. These individuals may be especially vulnerable to becoming lost in complicated administrative and legal systems.

Without someone outside the facility checking on their circumstances, assisting with communication, or following their progress, important needs may go unnoticed. Some individuals may have nobody to help coordinate their release, locate personal belongings, care for pets, obtain identification, or connect them with housing and community resources. Others may have reported mistreatment or become caught in repeated cycles of incarceration without adequate support.

The pilot will focus on identifying individuals who could benefit from independent assistance and offering them voluntary participation.

Proposed Pilot Services

Services may include:

- **Direct Outreach:** Outreach to incarcerated individuals who lack outside support.
- **Consistent Contact:** Establishing consistent contact with participating individuals.
- **System Navigation:** Assisting with communication, administrative navigation, and service referrals.
- **Legal Referrals:** Connecting participants with qualified legal assistance when necessary.
- **Release Planning:** Helping individuals prepare for release and access community resources.
- **Essential Coordination:** Coordinating practical assistance involving housing, identification, transportation, and essential personal needs.
- **Barrier Identification:** Identifying potential barriers to appropriate medical or mental health services.
- **Reporting & Intake:** Documenting participant-reported concerns involving institutional practices.
- **Systemic Tracking:** Tracking outcomes and recurring barriers that may indicate larger systemic problems.

All assistance would be provided with appropriate consent and within the legal and operational requirements of correctional facilities. Peer advocates would not replace attorneys, licensed healthcare professionals, or other qualified service providers.

Why Start Small?

The initial program is intentionally limited. The purpose is not to promise assistance to everyone immediately, but to create a functioning model that can be evaluated and improved. Starting with a small group will allow the organization to establish realistic service expectations, develop documentation procedures, measure costs, and determine what resources are needed for expansion.

4. Independent Oversight: Accountability Without Institutional Control

Independent oversight is essential to the proposed model. An organization cannot effectively investigate the conduct of local institutions if those institutions control its funding, management, findings, or operations.

The proposed oversight program will focus on local government agencies, particularly law enforcement and other local institutions whose actions directly affect vulnerable community members. Its work may include examining reported misconduct, harmful institutional practices, retaliation concerns, failures of intervention, and recurring procedural problems.

Potential Areas of Review

- **Law Enforcement Protocols:** Local law enforcement practices and responses to individuals in crisis.
- **Accountability Systems:** Local government accountability and complaint-handling procedures.
- **Vulnerable Populations:** The treatment of vulnerable individuals within locally administered justice systems.
- **Family & Safety Procedures:** Local agency practices affecting protective orders, domestic violence responses, and family stability.
- **Cycles of Institutional Involvement:** Patterns of repeated institutional involvement that may contribute to homelessness, incarceration, or unnecessary crisis escalation.

Funding and Institutional Independence

The initiative intends to pursue state-level financial support without accepting funding or operational direction from the local government agencies subject to its oversight. The proposed oversight mandate would be limited to local institutions, rather than state agencies.

Local agencies under review would have no authority to approve, suppress, alter, or otherwise control findings. The organization would establish transparent research

procedures, conflict-of-interest policies, independent governance, and appropriate protections against interference by any funder.

The goal is not to assume that misconduct has occurred in every case. The goal is to ensure that when concerns arise, there is an independent means of documenting, evaluating, and reporting them. Public safety institutions should be accountable for the safety they are funded to provide.

5. Forensic Peer Support and Civilian Intervention

Traditional public safety responses frequently involve law enforcement, even when a situation primarily concerns mental health, homelessness, family instability, or access to essential services. Law enforcement has an important role in responding to immediate threats and serious violence. However, not every crisis requires an armed response.

This initiative proposes developing a system in which trained civilian professionals and peer-support specialists can intervene in appropriate situations before they escalate into emergencies, arrests, or additional harm.

The Long-Term Model

- **Civilian Crisis Response:** Trained personnel responding to suitable nonviolent crises, with clear safety protocols and emergency escalation procedures.
- **Forensic Peer Support:** Individuals with relevant lived experience providing practical support to people navigating justice-related challenges.
- **Justice System Navigation:** Helping individuals understand processes, access appropriate services, and maintain continuity of support.
- **Domestic Violence and Protective-Order Navigation:** Providing trauma-informed support, appropriate referrals, and assistance accessing qualified advocacy and legal resources.
- **Family Stability Intervention:** Identifying opportunities for voluntary support that may prevent avoidable family disruption while prioritizing the safety of children and people experiencing abuse.
- **Post-Incarceration Support:** Helping individuals transition from custody to stable community services and reducing barriers that may contribute to repeated incarceration.

The initiative would not replace law enforcement, the courts, or licensed professionals. Its purpose would be to demonstrate which public safety needs may be addressed more effectively through qualified civilian intervention.

6. Data Collection: Measuring the True Cost of Public Safety

The research component is central to this proposal. Without meaningful data, communities cannot reliably determine whether existing interventions are effective, whether public spending produces lasting improvements, or whether preventable institutional failures generate additional costs.

Our proposed research will examine the relationship between institutional intervention, individual outcomes, and public expenditures.

Key Research Questions

1. How much public money is spent responding repeatedly to the same individuals or recurring crises?
2. When do government actions contribute to escalating situations rather than resolving them?
3. What costs arise when individuals are incarcerated instead of receiving more appropriate support?
4. How does the absence of family, community, or independent advocacy affect outcomes?
5. What happens when a person has consistent civilian support throughout their involvement with public systems?
6. Can early intervention reduce repeated arrests, emergency responses, homelessness, or other costly outcomes?
7. Where are existing government programs succeeding, and where are they failing to produce measurable improvements?
8. How might public safety resources be allocated differently to improve outcomes?

Research Methodology

The organization would develop consistent procedures for:

- Recording services and interventions.

- Tracking participant outcomes over time.
- Reviewing available public records and budget information.
- Documenting participant-reported experiences while distinguishing allegations from verified findings.
- Comparing the costs of different interventions when reliable information is available.
- Identifying repeat patterns and possible opportunities for prevention.
- Publishing findings and recommendations.

A long-term research goal would be a comprehensive evaluation every two years, supported by periodic progress reports. Participation, sensitive records, and public reporting would be governed by privacy protections, informed consent, appropriate data security, and applicable laws. Research findings would clearly acknowledge limitations and would not attribute harm or cost savings to a particular cause without sufficient evidence.

7. The Economic Case for Change

The proposed model is based on a straightforward economic question: **Is it more effective to spend public money preventing a crisis or to repeatedly spend money responding to its consequences?**

The answer will vary depending on the type of crisis, the services available, and the circumstances involved. That is precisely why independent research is necessary.

For example, repeated incarceration may involve police response costs, transportation, detention, court proceedings, legal services, healthcare, and post-release assistance. If earlier civilian intervention could safely prevent even some unnecessary episodes, the resulting benefits might include both better individual outcomes and reduced public expense.

Conversely, the research must identify situations in which civilian intervention is insufficient or does not produce savings. We intend to develop an evidence-based framework that allows policymakers to distinguish effective investments from expensive, repetitive responses that fail to solve underlying problems.

The public deserves to know whether its public safety dollars are preventing harm or repeatedly responding to it.

8. Business Model and Financial Sustainability

The initiative is proposed as an independently operated, mission-driven enterprise during its development stage. Its legal structure and eligibility for particular funding programs will be determined before grant applications or public contracts are submitted.

The longer-term objective is to establish a sustainable model supported through appropriate state-level funding, research partnerships, and service agreements that preserve independence from agencies under review.

Potential Sources of Revenue

- **Research and Evaluation Contracts:** Conducting independent studies, program evaluations, and public expenditure analyses for eligible institutions.
- **State-Funded Pilot Programs:** Seeking appropriations, grants, or contracts to test civilian-led public safety services and measure outcomes.
- **Training and Consultation:** Developing educational programs and procedures for community organizations and civilian support professionals.
- **Program Development and Licensing:** Creating documented operating models, training materials, and implementation frameworks that other communities can adopt.
- **Independent Grants and Private Sponsorships:** Supporting research, technology, organizational development, and startup expenses through eligible funding sources that do not compromise independence.

These are proposed revenue channels, not existing contracts or guaranteed sources of income. The organization would maintain a clear separation between fee-supported services and independent oversight findings.

9. Initial Startup Funding

The immediate objective is to establish the organizational and technical foundation necessary to conduct a small pilot program.

Startup Funding Priorities

- Business formation and administrative development where needed.
- Appropriate insurance, professional consultation, and compliance planning.
- Development of peer-support and oversight procedures.
- A secure documentation and data management system.
- Research framework design and evaluation tools.
- Basic equipment and technology.
- Training materials and safety procedures.
- Community outreach and stakeholder engagement.
- Preparation of future state funding proposals and partnerships.

The first phase would not attempt to establish an entire public safety department or serve the full community. Instead, it would demonstrate that the proposed model can be organized, operated, documented, and meaningfully evaluated. A detailed budget would be developed based on available startup resources and the requirements of each funding opportunity.

10. Development and Implementation

- **Phase One: Organizational Foundation:** Establish the initial operating structure, research standards, governance safeguards, confidentiality procedures, and program documentation systems. Identify potential partners, qualified advisers, and relevant community resources.
- **Phase Two: Limited Inmate Advocacy Pilot:** Begin voluntary outreach to a manageable number of incarcerated individuals who lack meaningful outside support, subject to facility access and participant consent. Provide defined assistance, record activities, and begin measuring outcomes.
- **Phase Three: Research and Evaluation:** Analyze documented interventions, recurring institutional barriers, participant outcomes, and available public expenditure data. Identify opportunities to improve services and refine the proposed civilian response model.
- **Phase Four: Public Policy Proposal:** Prepare a formal report for state lawmakers and local government officials outlining the program's findings, implementation requirements, estimated costs, and recommendations. Seek consideration of a publicly funded civilian public safety pilot or other appropriate program structure.

- **Phase Five: Expansion or Government Adoption:** If the evidence supports expansion, pursue a broader network of civilian support services. The operational program could be expanded by the founding enterprise, qualified community partners, or an appropriate public agency. Any government adoption would require specific safeguards to preserve the independence of external oversight and research.

11. A Model That Can Outlive Its Founder

The value of this initiative should not depend entirely on one person being able to implement or manage it. Its purpose is to develop an approach that can benefit the community regardless of who ultimately operates the program.

Accordingly, the project will seek to document its procedures, research methods, staffing requirements, safety standards, and measurable outcomes in a form that can be evaluated and adopted by other qualified organizations.

If the founding enterprise cannot independently develop the entire proposed program, the model may be presented to government agencies, research institutions, or community partners interested in further development. The essential objective is not personal ownership of a public safety function. The objective is to establish a better public safety option and ensure that the research and ideas can contribute to lasting community improvements.

12. The Long-Term Vision: Public Safety Without Automatically Reaching for Enforcement

We envision a community where a person experiencing crisis can receive effective help before the situation reaches the point of arrest, incarceration, family disruption, or emergency hospitalization:

- **Support for the Isolated:** A community where individuals without family or outside support are not simply forgotten.
- **Unbiased Institutional Accountability:** A community where reported institutional misconduct can be documented and examined without influence from the agencies involved.

- **Outcome-Based Metrics:** A community where public safety is measured by outcomes rather than the number of enforcement actions taken.
- **Public Transparency:** A community where taxpayers can examine what their money is actually accomplishing.

This initiative proposes that civilian intervention, independent oversight, and transparent research deserve a place in the future of public safety.

We are not asking the public to assume this model will work. We are proposing to build it, test it, measure it, and let the evidence demonstrate what it can accomplish.

Closing Statement

There is a cost to ignoring someone in crisis. There is a cost to repeatedly incarcerating someone who is asking for help. There is a cost to turning a person's trauma into evidence against them, and then using their resulting instability to justify further punishment. There is also a cost to maintaining institutions without adequately examining the consequences of their actions.

Taxpayers should not have to finance preventable institutional harm and then finance the services needed to repair it. The public deserves a system that measures its effectiveness, acknowledges its failures, and actively works to prevent unnecessary harm.

We propose to begin with the people who have nobody looking out for them. We will develop the research needed to evaluate a different approach. And we will work toward a future in which public safety means more than enforcement.

Protect the people. Document the systems. Measure the outcomes. Change what isn't working.