

My name is Catherine Steffano and I live in Bend, Oregon.

My daughter started exhibiting symptoms of mental illness approximately five years ago, when she was 18 years old. Her first hospitalization was at that time.

She has been admitted to psychiatric hospitals 14 more times since then, the most recent time being August 2018. On multiple occasions, she left these facilities after being placed on 72-hour mental health holds, against medical advice.

I believe this caused her much more pain and trauma as she experienced homelessness, extreme physical and mental abuse, and ongoing psychosis. It was not until she was civilly committed for the second time that I was able to get emergency temporary guardianship, and then permanent guardianship. This enabled me to be able to keep her hospitalized long enough to have a trial of oral antipsychotics and then a monthly injectable antipsychotic. Since then, she has been much more stable and has had no further hospitalizations.

I believe if it had been easier to get her civilly committed much earlier, my daughter potentially could have avoided the multiple admissions and trauma to her brain caused by her multiple psychotic episodes.

Please support SB 763.