

**March 18, 2019**

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**RE SB 763**

Chair Senator Prozanski  
Vice Chair Senator Thatcher  
Senator Bentz  
Senator Fagan  
Senator Gelser

Senator Linthicum  
Senator Manning

I lived my childhood with one of my parents being civilly committed off and on throughout my growing up. I had to spend time in foster care, at least temporarily. Now as an adult, I've been recently diagnosed after getting into trouble with the law. I am at Oregon State Hospital (OSH) now under a guilty except for insanity (GEI) plea.

I've been able to look at it from both sides – of a family member wanting to get treatment – and as someone who does not want to be forced. My sister has been civilly committed, and I have seen it help her. I have not seen it help my mother.

I was in college and as mental health challenges hit I lost my placement at school, lost my housing, and had challenges finding a job while I was homeless. I tried to access services and was told there was nothing for me, just get a job. Eventually I got into trouble with the law, and here I am.

I am torn about this bill. We really need more resources in our communities to detect and support people asking for help right away. We need more public education about this field and how it impacts people. And we need more people trained to listen and understand the people living with mental illness, their diagnoses, impacts on their lives, strategies to help keep their lives on track. I try to think and live holistically. I know medication can help some people – it's helped me get my mind back. I wasn't forced to take meds though, and think if I had been, it would not have gone well for me. I have seen biochemistry and meds help and not help most members of my family over the years.

To sum it up, I think there needs to be more thought, and looking into community resources and access before passing this bill. Please do not pass and take a closer look at our entire system before moving ahead with such a big change.