



March 20, 2019

## **Legislative Testimony to House Committee on Human Services and Housing regarding HB3208**

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer and Members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Royce Bowlin, Executive Director for the Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs. In one of my prior professional lives I was an executive for Oregon's largest provider of BH services, Cascadia. I'm also a former Oregon foster parent and the proud parent of a 13-year old boy, named Izaac, who my husband and I adopted through Oregon's Child Welfare system a year and half ago.

I'm here in support of HB320.

The Alliance represents close to 40 child and family service providers across Oregon including urban, rural and frontier area. Combined the members deliver services to over 100,000 children and their families in Oregon annually. Our providers offer the full continuum of services and supports for children, youth, young adults and their families. This includes prevention, outpatient behavioral health services, in-home services, residential, parental supports, therapeutic foster care, and mentoring. Combined our providers behavioral health staff are in over 120 schools across Oregon, helping children every day.

I'm here with my colleagues to talk about the need for an investment in our workforce that supports Oregon's most at risk children. The workforce that supports these children every day is critical to the health, safety, stability and wellbeing of these children. Some of our providers report turnover rates 40 to 50% annually with their direct care staff. This directly impacts a child's sense of safety and ability to develop meaningful relationships with caring adults. The child and family provider system has and continues to be severely under-funded and regulated in a manner that interferes with a child's treatment. The providers welcome oversight and safety regulations and those who provide this oversight MUST be trauma-informed.



Oregon needs a compressive, and well-funded system of care to support these at-risk children and their families at the right time, place and level. In the long run this will save money and it's what Oregon's children deserve.

Chair Keny-Guyer and members of the committee, the system is in crisis, as demonstrated by the 80 plus children who are out of state due to a lack of capacity in Oregon. Unfortunately, these kids pay the price for a poorly resourced system. We believe HB3208 begins to address this issue.

The Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs urges you to support HB3208.

Thank you,  
Royce Bowlin