



Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Dear Chair Williamson, Vice Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for your time and willingness to consider our testimony. **The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV) strongly supports House Bill 2657**, which would dedicate \$3 million in funding to violence prevention education throughout the state.

This bill, if enacted into law, will help make Oregon communities safer for everyone. Prevention programs promote healthy relationships, teach bystander intervention skills, and promote norms change and the prevention of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and dating and interpersonal violence. Additionally, several OCADSV member programs are participating in our *Prevention Through Liberation* initiative, which addresses sexual violence at its deepest roots by supporting culturally specific primary prevention education activities and interventions.

As first responders and subject matter experts, community-based nonprofit advocacy programs, culturally specific programs, and tribal government programs are uniquely suited to implement primary prevention education in their communities. Prevention educators working for these agencies work in partnership with schools to address the root causes of violence, shift community norms, and respond effectively and compassionately to disclosures from survivors of violence.

While we have made many positive strides to improve our prevention and response efforts, our communities across Oregon lack the resources and infrastructure to fully implement and sustain effective violence prevention education. This bill would help lay a better foundation for our member programs and community partners to address the issue of violence before it even occurs.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We appreciate the Legislature prioritizing violence prevention and response efforts through this bill and other actions taken this legislative session.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vanessa Timmons".

Vanessa Timmons  
Executive Director, Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

*Founded in 1978, The Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (OCADSV) is a statewide nonprofit organization that is comprised of 51 member programs that provide advocacy services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking throughout the state.*

To learn more about the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, visit:  
<https://www.ocadsv.org>