

March 27, 2019

Re: Support HB 2657

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

My name is Michael Wu. I am an attorney living in Clackamas County. I was previously Chair of the Oregon Board of Parole and before that I was a Deputy District Attorney in Clackamas County. I am currently a Board Member for Clackamas Women's Services.

I am writing to urge the committee to support HB 2657 because of the critical domestic and sexual violence educational programming it will support in our schools. As a Board Member for Clackamas Women's Services I am proud of the work the organization is doing to provide this programming. As a Parole Board Member I listened to several cases involving domestic violence homicide. I believe those deaths could have been prevented if proper educational violence prevention programming had been available at that time.

Prevention programs promote healthy relationships, teach bystander intervention skills, and promote change in social norms and the prevention of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and dating and interpersonal violence. In our community, prevention educators, through Clackamas Women's Services (CWS), address the root causes of violence, shift community norms, are trained to respond to disclosures, and work in partnership with schools, as well as intervention and crisis services, and help build thriving, safe, and healthy communities.

Without a dedicated source of funding, Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs like CWS are caught in the bind of constantly having to respond to crises without having resources to stop this violence before it ever occurs. While we have made many positive strides to improve our prevention and response efforts, our communities across Oregon lack infrastructure, technical assistance, and resources to fully implement and sustain effective violence prevention education. Your support for HB 2657 will change this by funding comprehensive violence prevention.

The solution is clear. We must invest in violence prevention education to address the epidemic of domestic and sexual violence in Oregon. The path forward is clear, programs across the state are poised to act, schools are eager to provide this much needed education...a funding stream dedicated to violence prevention education will achieve long term positive impacts on the problem of sexual and domestic violence in Oregon.

Respectfully,

