## Testimony in support of HB2657-2 House Judiciary Committee Submitted by: The Prevention Team at HAVEN from Domestic and Sexual Violence March 29, 2019

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

We make up the Prevention Team at HAVEN from Domestic and Sexual Violence in The Dalles, OR, and we are pleased to write in strong support of HB2657-2.

For over 38 years, HAVEN has worked, in Wasco, Gilliam, Wheeler, and Sherman Counties, to provide safe and supportive services to those affected by domestic and sexual violence by empowering survivors and our community through advocacy, education, and prevention. HAVEN believes that all people have the right to violence-free lives. Domestic violence, teen

dating violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking, and child abuse should never be tolerated or condoned. These acts have a devastating effect on survivors, their families, and society as a whole.

Through culturally sensitive awareness, creative solutions, education. and communicating proactive behaviors that establish intolerance of violence with those make around us, we our communities safer.



For the past 15 years, HAVEN has worked with schools, groups, and community members throughout the four counties we serve, to implement effective violence prevention programming. Currently our prevention program serves 19 different public schools, elementary through high school grades, serving up to 800 students per year in Oregon's rural and frontier communities.

Our prevention program aims to see a reduction in bullying and dating violence in schools, create more awareness around sexual and domestic violence within our communities, and empower students with concrete intervention methods they can implement when they see something happening that doesn't align with their values. We do this by promoting comprehensive prevention education and positive youth development around healthy relationships, sexual violence prevention, and sexual health promotion.

We also facilitate a student Troupe program made up of an active group of high school students who focus more deeply on issues surrounding the violence in their and our communities, and

the role young folks can play in preventing future violence. This group plans and leads an annual Summit geared toward youth and healthy relationships, and helps promote positive youth/adult partnerships in our communities.



As a result of our prevention program, we have documented increased understanding of; consent, the signs of healthy relationships, and bystander intervention methods, from K-12 students. We are also consistently seeing increasing desire from schools to support not only youth education, but staff, teacher, and administrator training as well.

It is because of consistent funding that we have been able to sustain and grow our prevention program over the last 15 years to reach more people in our communities and have a larger impact. We currently receive a combination of federal and private funding sources in order to sustain our current prevention programming. We still consistently receive requests to expand into after school programs, college student group trainings, and school administration trainings, among others. This expansion is made more challenging by limited capacity (time, staffing, and funding) in order to support these efforts.

HB2657-2 would help programs across the state build robust community-led violence prevention programs like ours, and help grow Oregon's existing prevention work that has demonstrated impact through thoughtful evaluation and assessment strategies.

A healthy community is ours to create. The more people that take action; when we invest in prevention, the closer we get to that goal.

We would like to extend a warm thank you to Chair Williamson, Vice Chairs Gorsek and Sprenger, and members of the House Judiciary Committee as they work towards further promoting violence prevention efforts in Oregon and for taking the time to consider our testimony.

Thank you,

Alexis Crawford, Prevention Educator Makenna Jordan, Prevention Educator Nik Portela, Bilingual Prevention Educator Sarah Franklin, Community Education and Communications Program Coordinator Tara Koch, Executive Director