



AFSCME Support for HB 3279 and HB 3095

Chair Salinas, Vice-chairs Hayden and Nosse and members of the Health Care Committee,

Thank you, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3279 and HB 3095, establishing uniform medical assistance payments for providers and stabilizing payments for mental health and substance use disorder treatments. Oregon AFCME represents a growing number of members in behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment.

The people in the behavioral health and substance use disorder workforce, like many of our other care-giving professions, are experiencing low pay and high turn-over rates. Keeping people in the profession to provide for the highest level of services is critical for outcomes for clients. When a mental health therapist or addictions counselor leaves an office, they leave their clients to have to start over with a new person. They have to open up to yet another person about their often traumatic pasts, setting them back on their path to recovery. AFSCME sees these two bills as important to ensuring employers are receiving consistent payments for the services they provide and at a rate that hopefully goes to support the workforce and we urge you to pass these two bills.

Respectfully submitted by Eva Rippeteau, Political Coordinator, AFSCME Council 75.