

Dear Oregon House of Representatives,

My name is Doctor Emmanuel MONNERON and I am a licensed psychiatrist working in Lyon, France. Today, I'm writing this letter to support bill SB 749.

In September 2020, after watching a French documentary about conversion therapies, I discovered the existence of thousands of residential treatment centers and therapeutic boarding schools in the United States of America. I had no idea that these places existed and what I have read about what's happening behind the walls of these facilities absolutely terrified me.

It seems like the behavior modification programs used in these facilities are presented by the companies running these places as perfect treatments for many different mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse, post traumatic stress disorders and many other things. Instead of providing evidence based treatment, these facilities keep vulnerable children isolated from the outside world and even from their friends and families for months and sometimes years. This goes against all the international recommendations when it comes to treating vulnerable children and can definitely worsen the condition of vulnerable children. The testimonies of the survivors of these facilities are filled with information about the way these programs use cruel punishments to break the residents and modify their behavior. The use of isolation, mechanical restraints, forced medication, violence, corporal punishments, humiliation is pretty well described in many testimonies. Official reports describe inappropriate medical treatments, poor hygiene and poor living conditions in these places when the companies running these programs charge the families or the state huge amounts of money.

Sadly, and due to lack of regulation, it seems like mistreatment and child abuse happens frequently in the "Troubled Teen Industry" facilities. That is the reason why educational consultants should be required to make extensive research about the places they recommend to families and vulnerable children. Educational consulting can have a huge impact on the health of children and should be a regulated activity for this reason. Considering how much money is involved, the risk of corruption is high and making sure that vulnerable youth are safe and well treated, no matter which consultant they have met, has to be a priority.

I am not an American citizen but as a mental health professional, I do believe that it's my responsibility to do everything I can to help protecting vulnerable children anywhere in the world. I think bill SB749 is an important text able to improve the quality of the care provided to struggling youth in the state of Oregon, USA.

That's the reason why I'm supporting this bill. I hope that the Oregon's House of Representatives will decide to support it too and I hope that this will be another important step towards more regulation in the Troubled Teen Industry.

I thank you for your attention and the time you spent reading this letter,

Respectfully,

Dr Emmanuel MONNERON  
Psychiatrist  
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Lyon  
FRANCE