

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 707.

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. 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 each resident of these behavior modification programs should be able to get information about the treatments they received while they were interned in these facilities. All the patients sent to these "treatment centers" are children and they can't defend themselves before turning 18. All of them should be able to claim compensation for the prejudices suffered during their time in the "Troubled Teen Industry" if they suffered prejudices. The staff members of these facilities and the people responsible for these programs should be held accountable for any abuse or mistreatment happening during a child treatment. This appears to be the only way to force these people to keep the child's best interests in mind instead of trying to maximize their profits by cutting on the amount of staff members and the quality of the staff training in these places. Taking care of vulnerable children is something only well trained professionals can do properly.

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 SB707 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
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FRANCE