



March 29, 2021

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Nosse, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services:

As the Executive Director of the Oregon Alliance, an advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring there are services and supports available at the right time and place to improve the lives of children, adolescents, young adults, and families across Oregon. I urge you to support Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Policy Option Package (POP) 110. This would provide an upward adjustment in the Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) rate to address the 40 to 60% annual staff turnover rate. It would also provide over \$3M in federal matching funds.

I want to highlight a few high level points:

- **Turnover negatively impacts outcomes for children and youth in the child welfare system. Turnover is at 40 to 60% annually. Staff stability is a vital factor in child/youth outcomes and safety.**
- **Organizations are spending over 6% of their annual revenue towards the cost of turnover, training of staff, and lost productivity. For some organizations, they are spending upwards of 10%.**
- **Staff working full-time report struggling financially to pay rent and utilities, service student loan debt, and/or provide food. Some rely on government entitlements to survive.**
- **Rates should be adjusted regularly to address inflation. Current rates are based on 2017 Oregon wage information.**

Thank you for your continued commitment in ensuring youth and young adults have access to high-quality supports and services so they too will have an opportunity to thrive and live their best lives. **Please improve outcomes for kids in child welfare by reducing the 40 to 60% annually turnover and support Oregon Department of Human Services Budget, specifically the funding of POP 110.**

Royce Bowlin
Executive Director