



March 30, 2021

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

As Executive Director of Oregon Community Programs (OCP) dedicated to providing evidence-based treatment foster care and behavioral health services to improve the lives of youth and young adults in Lane County and across the state of 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.

Oregon Community Programs was founded to make the best research based therapeutic interventions available to vulnerable children and their families, and we have operated in Lane County since the early 1990s. Our organization is the only agency in the State of Oregon that provides Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFCO), the best researched and most effective therapeutic foster care intervention for high needs youth such as those in our Behavioral Rehabilitation Service (BRS) system.

BRS programs are community-based and support youth with severe psychosocial, emotional, and behavioral issues through behavioral intervention, counseling, and skills-training. These programs support children and youth to address their significant trauma and to build their own resiliency.

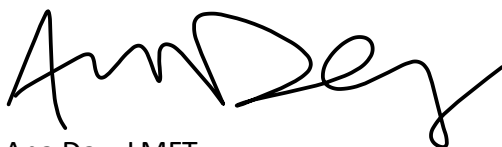
Last year, the Legislature invested in SB1, which made funding available to expand evidence-based treatment foster care, and our agency, in collaboration with other agencies around the state, are poised to expand our offerings to serve the highest needs youth in Oregon in family-

settings. We need your continued support to sustain these improvements through supporting POP 110.

POP 110 would begin to address high staff turnover by adjusting the Oregon Wage Information (OWI) to 2021 data. It would also adjust the rate ongoing to assure that the most current salary data for direct care and other staff are used in the agencies' legislatively approved budgets. Based on a survey conducted by the Oregon Alliance, the average cost of staff turnover for a single qualified mental health professional is \$22,800. The cost of staff turnover of a direct care staff person is at least \$6,100. Neither of these numbers even consider the intangible cost of disrupting therapeutic relationships and slowing treatment progress of clients and their families. In the last year at OCP, we lost \$93,000 on our BRS programs alone due to reimbursement rates being too low to retain qualified staff, resulting in unnecessary turnover. We are asking you to approve the funding adjustment using 2021 OWI numbers. High turnover leads to increased costs and has negative impacts on care quality, even with careful screening and training that we diligently provide. This produces significant costs to organizations, but the real cost is to vulnerable children and families, preventing the long-term sustainability of evidence-based practices to help them improve their lives. This is an investment in Oregon's children and the staff that support them every day.

At OCP, we are committed to "fostering success in families." 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 through support for DHS POP 110.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ana Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ana Day, LMFT

Executive Director
Oregon Community Programs
1170 Pearl St.
Eugene, OR 97401