



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Date: April 6, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair Tawna Sanchez
The Honorable Vice-Chair Rob Nosse
The Honorable Vice-Chair Raquel Moore-Green
Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee

From: Maya Lopez, MD
Daniel Nicoli, DO
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

RE: HB 2949, Provider incentives to improve the BH workforce

Chair Sanchez, Vice Chairs and members of the House Behavioral Health Committee:

The Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA), a district branch of the American Psychiatric Association, was established in 1966. OPPA serves as the organization for Oregon's medical doctors specializing in psychiatry who work together to ensure effective treatment for persons with mental illness, including substance use disorders, and compassion for them and their families.

OPPA supports HB 2949, which offers provider incentives to increase the diversity of the behavioral health workforce and improve culturally responsive care. Marginalized communities often suffer from poor mental health outcomes due to many factors, including inaccessibility of mental health services, stigma, and discrimination. An additional barrier to high-quality mental health care is the lack of psychiatrists who are part of the communities that have suffered from health inequity.

We would like to respectfully request that psychiatric physicians and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners be included in the list of beneficiaries for health care provider incentives. Oregon has a shortage of psychiatrists and demand will continue to further outpace the supply of psychiatrists in clinical practice unless measures are taken to recruit and train more psychiatrists to practice with the communities that need their services. Furthermore, including psychiatrists and psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners in the incentives proposed in HB 2949 will help improve equity in mental health care by improving access to culturally competent care for some of the most psychiatrically complex patients who are also part of marginalized and rural populations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We urge your support of this bill.

Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

PO Box 21571, Keizer OR 97307

info@oregonpsychiatric.org

www.oregonpsychiatric.org