

Chair Sanchez and members of the committee:

My name is Aaron Moore and I live in Hillsboro, Oregon. I have struggled with my mental health since I was 13 years old and living in Arizona.

When I moved to Oregon as an adult, I had already been misdiagnosed, had no income, and no permanent place to live. I bounced around staying with friends. I had no insurance. When I was finally able to get the Oregon Health Plan, it was easier to find a primary care provider who accepted OHP than a prescriber and therapist. When I was seeking help, I was in the midst of a mental health crisis, and I did not fully understand how to go through the steps to get help.

I went to the first doctor I could find who accepted OHP; unfortunately, the first anti-anxiety medication I tried made me more symptomatic. At the time, I was in a toxic relationship and had no one to help me navigate the system. It got to the point where I was so anxious that I couldn't leave my house.

Finally, I was able to do some research and reached out to William Temple House. They connected me with an advocate. Because of that support, I was finally able to get a therapist I could connect with, the right diagnosis, and the right medication.

Now that I have been prescribed medication that is effective and have engaged in mental health treatment, I have been able to resume working full-time, and I have completed several trainings. These include Intentional Peer Support Specialist training, which led me to my current work as a peer support specialist serving clients with OHP. Because of finding proper prescriber, medication and appropriate supports, I now have the opportunity to help others in obtaining and maintaining stability.

I write in support of HB 3045 because no one should have to jump through hoops to get the proper help and treatment. Access to these critical resources made a life-changing difference for me when I finally found them.