



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION



Oregon Council of
Child & Adolescent
Psychiatry

Date: February 15, 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
Kirk Wolfe, MD
Oregon Council of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

RE: OPPA and OCCAP Support HB 2381 Youth Suicide Reporting

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

The Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA) and the Oregon Council of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (OCCAP) are pleased to offer this joint statement in support HB 2381. This bill modifies laws relating to youth suicide intervention and prevention to include children under 10 years of age.

The life of every child life matters. Children as young as seven years old have died by suicide in Oregon and although this is a rare occurrence, it is devastating to families, schools, and communities. We must pay attention to youth younger than ten years old, which is the current guideline. Suicide is the leading cause of death among Oregonians age 10 to 24 and many of the struggles, traumas, and the need for additional mental health support are evident before the age of 10.

The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey has shown a rise in depression and suicidality in high school students in the last six years. This reflects the increased stress felt by youth and families, which also affects children younger than ten. We also know that youth who attempt suicide are at a much higher risk for future suicide attempts. By supporting these younger children, we will get a better sense of their well-being over time and look to provide support, prevention, and intervention specific to this age group. Providing support for these children as soon as possible gives them the best chance for overcoming their challenges and living the full life that they deserve.