

# Office of Government Relations

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Date March 2, 2021

TO: The Honorable Sara Gelser, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery

SUBJECT: SB 66 Directs medical examiner to report suspected suicides involving decedents 24 years of age or younger to local mental health authority. Directs OHA to develop statewide suicide post-intervention protocol.

Chair Gelser and members of the committee: I am Taylor Steenblock, Government Relations at Multnomah County. I am here to represent our County's strong support for consistent, accurate, and prompt reporting of youth suicides to the home county most impacted by a suicide as well as the county where medical treatment was sought.

Multnomah County is promoting passage of HB 3037. While similar in spirit to SB 66, HB 3037 allows for direct information sharing between counties without relying on the Oregon Health Authority as a middle person. The ability to share information directly between counties as well as with OHA allows for meaningful postvention work in a much more timely manner. As we all can appreciate, timely postvention is critical for grieving families and the suicide victim's community.

HB 3037 is the product of months of stakeholder engagement. Working through the Association of Counties (AOC), we conducted outreach with 27 Medical Examiners across Oregon's counties. This outreach yielded proposed reporting timelines based on county size and capacity, outlined in HB 3037. We have also been working closely with other counties and Rep. Dexter's office to ensure the reporting structure offers the authority needed with regard to types of information most useful for postvention. Stakeholders have expressed how critical these changes are given the current statutory limitations.

We believe that HB 3037 will lead to better services for communities and cleaner data so we can understand the true nature of youth suicide and its broader impacts in our state. We urge you to put your support behind HB 3037 as the vehicle for improving youth suicide reporting and postvention. Alternatively we suggest amending this bill to match the text in HB 3037. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**Taylor Steenblock**  
Multnomah County Government Relations