



Oregon Pediatric Society

A Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Incorporated in Oregon

DATE: February 28, 2021

TO: Senator Patterson, Chair; Vice-Chair Knopp;
and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care

FROM: Katharine Zuckerman MD, MPH, FAAP

Member of the Oregon Pediatric Society

SUBJECT: Support SB 355 & 358 – Extends Applied Behavioral Analysis Insurance Coverage

The Oregon Pediatric Society (OPS) is the state chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Our membership is committed to improving and protecting the health and well-being of all children in Oregon. For the record, my name is Dr. Katharine Zuckerman. I am a general pediatrician and a member of the Oregon Pediatric Society. We support SB 355 and 358, which would extend existing legislation mandating insurance coverage for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) in Oregon.

Oregon was a leader in instituting coverage for ABA services for children with autism and other similar disorders. All 50 states now have legislation supporting ABA therapy for children, and it is important to maintain coverage in our state. ABA coverage by insurers has been a huge leap forward in terms of access to evidence-based care for autism in our country. Many Oregon children have been helped by this legislation to become more functional and do better in social, academic, and employment situations.

Furthermore, autism has become even more prevalent in the 10 years since the law was initially passed, making it even more important now. There is every reason to support this bill – the program has been successful, children have benefitted, and it has also brought skilled jobs to Oregon.

SB 358 proposes some common-sense improvements to the current legislation, including clarifying reporting and oversight requirements, increasing parity with other mental health legislation, and strengthens the law in cases of child abuse and neglect. In our view, this legislation supports high-quality care for vulnerable children—something Oregon Pediatric Society strongly supports.



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I urge you to vote yes on SB 355 & 358. I am happy to be a resource to this committee if you have any questions.

Katharine Zuckerman MD MPH FAAP
Portland, Oregon