



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Date: February 8, 2022

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

From: Daniel Nicoli, DO, Co-Chair
Maya López, MD, Co-Chair
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

RE: HB 4085, Minor consent for treatment

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Daniel Nicoli. I'm a child & adolescent psychiatrist and co-chair of the Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association Legislative Committee. I'm here on behalf of OPPIA to testify about HB 4085. This bill permits a parent or guardian to admit a child, with or without their consent, to an inpatient facility or program licensed by the Oregon Health Authority or Department of Human Services for certain mental, emotional behavioral health or substance use disorder treatment.

We agree that the system of providing crisis stabilization services to children and families in Oregon is flawed. Many hospitals do not integrate psychiatric crisis into their continuum of care and are not properly staffed with experts in behavioral health. This is made all the worse by the current workforce shortage and increased utilization of these services. There are efforts to address these flaws including dividing the state into six regions with individual hubs designed to serve the needs of the regional infrastructure and increasing the size of the mental health workforce. There are also efforts to provide behavioral health services that can intervene before a child or family is in crisis, such as integration of into schools.

While we support efforts to improve crisis services to children and families, we worry about the unintended consequences of HB 4085. Requiring an evaluation by a neutral fact factor to admit minors to psychiatric facilities in certain situations adds another layer of complexity that may make it more difficult for these families to access the needed care. This bill would increase the bar for admission to a psychiatric facility by requiring that a child "pose a risk of harm to the child or others...." There are many other reasons that a child may need to be admitted to a psy-

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chiatric facility including but not limited to treatment of first episode psychosis or mania and detoxification from a non-lethal substance.

We believe that the treatment of children and families in psychiatric crisis is an important topic and ask to be a part of the discussion. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective on this bill.