

2/2/2023

HB2089

Robert Sanders

Dear Chair Representative Nancy Nathanson, Vice Chair Representative E. Werner Reschke, Vice Chair Representative Jules Walters, and members of the Oregon House Committee on Revenue.

For the record, I am Robert M. Sanders, a person in long term recovery – a 6th generation Oregonian, naval veteran, and your constituent. Professionally, I am a Certified Recovery Mentor and Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor. I work at 4D Recovery as the Associate Director of Services.

I want to start by thanking legislators and Oregon Voters who made a clear commitment and investment within Recovery Support Services. I want to take time to credit the Oversight & Accountability team that put in place securities to ensure that Culturally Specific providers were going to have a seat at the table.

I want to thank the people who have fought tirelessly to protect an investment that's been sorely overdue. Now, I also want to question how we got here today, Oregon's fractured system needs support in a multitude of ways. We know this. However, we cannot expect to heal our state if the solution relies on taking money from one underfunded system, to repair another.

The Recent GAP Analysis completed by OHSU has presented this information as clear as day, Oregon's SUD treatment is currently 49% under capacity.

These funds, that are already lacking – Have made and will continue to make a demonstrable difference in the "Addiction Crisis" – as coined by Governor Kate Brown, but only if we remain steadfast in protecting the will of the voters and welfare of our state.

I am hopeful – when my Grandma, Governor Barbara Roberts, was advocating for disability-rights and education – she too, would often hear that there just wasn't enough money. There was. There is.

Oregon flies with her own wings, it leads with courage – and it finds ways to support our most impacted communities. Right now we are losing people every day – and the response CANNOT be to undercut the ability to respond. We need action – let yours start with safeguarding Recovery Support Services.

Thank you for your time and dedication to service.