

Submitter: Melanie Velez
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB303

Dear Honorable Members,

I am a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner who prescribes and gives therapy to many vulnerable individuals in a mental health and addiction service center. Many of my clients may benefit greatly from addressing their addictions, depression, and other mental health concerns with psilocybin services. These clients, your most vulnerable constituents, have voiced to me both their hope for progress out of their addictions to alcohol, nicotine, heroin, and methamphetamine and fear of being stigmatized further as individuals who use substances in the context of past substance use stigmatization.

This vulnerable population has been given by law extra privacy protections and it is this important protection that keeps them feeling safe enough to engage in seeking help for their addiction. For many, my office is the only truly safe space they have in the world. A psilocybin service center could be the second space....but not if their privacy cannot be protected.

Please clarify for us all before the first center opens, what information must be shared and how it will be transmitted, stored, and accessed (under what conditions will it be accessed). Since my post-doctoral work focused on psychedelic-assisted therapy research, I understand very well the counterpoint argument that the world needs to know how psilocybin does or does not help citizens....but these data collection, storage and sharing requirements have IRB oversight in addition to very clear rules about the handling of each data point- a process that will likely take longer for Oregon to develop than they reasonably have time for before psilocybin services are open for business.

Thank you for hearing my concerns,
Melanie King Velez DNP, PMHNP, BSN, RN