

Dear Chair Nosse and Members of the House Committee of Behavioral Health and Health Care:

My name is Elizabeth Sumpf, I'm a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice where I work with adult women who experienced trauma. I'm located in Portland and provide services to clients throughout the state. I'm in my own individual practice and have been a therapist for 12 years working with trauma survivors.

I'm writing to ask that you pass HB 2455.

The impact of audits on my colleagues and peers has been detrimental in my decision to limit the insurance that I accept in my practice. The immense stress due to the time, energy and money spent trying to navigate an audit limits my ability to accept certain insurance. As a small individual practice, I do not have the time or resources to fight a large insurance company so I would live in fear of recoupments. Many clinicians, including my close colleagues, do not have the profit margins to be able to pay back large amounts often collected after an unjust audit.

Due to the negative impact audits have had on my colleagues in terms of mental health and financial wellbeing I've decided that I will not accept certain insurances.

I understand this limits access to care and potential clients are unable to work with me since accepting these insurances is too much of a liability for myself and my practice. I believe that those in the community are suffering because of the unjust audit process.

These threatening audits drive clinicians out of practice, prevent clinicians from starting a practice and if they do then most clinicians avoid insurance altogether due to the negative impact of audits. Access to care is limited enough, especially in the middle of a three year pandemic and mental health crisis that continues to impact the most vulnerable people. These audits greatly limit the availability of clinicians that want to serve the community.

HB 2455 will make the audit process more transparent, just, and rare which will make providers more willing to stay on provider panels and to remain in practice in Oregon to provide care to our most vulnerable citizens.

Please support HB2455.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns around this important issue. I appreciate your time and efforts.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Sumpf, LCSW