

March 6, 2023

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

My name is Amy Ponteri. I am a licensed professional counselor (LPC), a licensed clinical art therapist (LCAT), and a nationally board-certified art therapist (ATR-BC) and have been practicing in Oregon for 24 years. I've worked in all manner of service settings and have had a private practice in Portland for 11 years where I serve adolescents, families, adults, and couples. Additionally, I provide clinical supervision for new graduates working toward licensure and professional consultation for seasoned clinicians.

I am urging you to please pass HB 2455.

Over my 11 years in private practice, I have whittled the number of insurance carriers I work with from six to one. As a clinical supervisor, I discourage new clinicians from paneling with more than three carriers, if any at all. This clearly reduces public access to mental health services, but as a sole practitioner, the time required to navigate the documentation nuances of each carrier is unsustainable. And the risk of improper documentation is serious financial recoupments, potentially dating back 30 months.

HB 2455 seeks to rectify these concerns in the following ways:

- HB 2455 will require each insurer or CCO to provide clear directions to each mental health provider submitting mental health claims, defining exactly what must be included in their documentation to avoid recoupment.
- HB 2455 would allow for providers to correct clerical errors, as the vast majority of required recoupments are based on simple clerical errors found in audits.
- HB 2455 limits the amount of time an audit of mental health claims can go back to 12 months. That will reduce the size of required recoupments.

No provider wants to be audited, but overall, HB 2455 will make the process more transparent and fair, giving providers clear directions and a just process to address errors and concerns found in audits, as opposed to sweeping and sizable recoupments.

With a clear process for documentation and correction, I hope that more providers would be willing to remain on panels to provide care to our most vulnerable citizens.

Thank you for considering my perspective and thoughts.

Regards,

Amy Ponteri, LPC, LCAT, ATR-BC