

Submitter: Jamie Matteucci
On Behalf Of: Foothills Counseling
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure: HB2455

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

My husband and I own and operate a group counseling practice in La Grande, OR. We serve Oregonians from surrounding counties as well because there is such a huge need and lack of providers in our region. For folks who have insurance, we are one of the few places they can go for services. I work very hard to make it possible to take their insurance, and it comes at a considerable cost, not the least of which is the constant cloud of fear that insurance will audit us and take back the money that our clinicians have legitimately earned. We attempt to abide by the strictest standards to make sure this doesn't happen, but things change often and instructions are often murky. I am constantly advocating for our clients to receive the insurance benefits they work hard for (and pay a lot for), while at the same time advocating for my highly qualified clinicians to receive the compensation they deserve, not to mention my responsibility to make sure the practice is financially viable. As an insurance based practice, the pressure is real and intense.

The uncertainty around individual commercial insurance standards, unpredictability of audits, and the constant issue of communication with the insurance reps (or lack thereof) to try and sort these things out is incredibly stressful and costly. Taking insurance is a considerable sacrifice that we make in order to make mental health care accessible and affordable to folks in our under-served area of Eastern Oregon. This is truly about being able to continue providing care to our community while making sure highly qualified clinicians receive the pay that they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Jamie Matteucci