



Testimony in Support of SB 1074

March 24, 2023

Chair Patterson and members of the Senate Committee on Health,

I am writing in support of SB 1074, which supports a demonstration project to assess the effectiveness of Community Health Workers' impact on social determinants of health that negatively impact many Oregonians.

In 1994, I began my career at Options Counseling and Family Services as a direct service provider, Family Builder, working with families who were referred through ODHS/Child Welfare. Eligibility for referred families required safety concerns with a significant risk of foster care placement. With direct intervention to identify and mitigate identified risk factors, children were able to maintain attachments to their caregivers and remain at home.

Over twenty years ago, Marion County was one of the a few counties that offered the Family Builder services that I provided. Counties were chosen based on a record of very high out-of-home placement rates. Eventually, Oregon determined that families in *all* counties would benefit: In-home Safety and Reunification Services (ISRS) is not available throughout the state. Currently, Options provides these services through ODHS/Child Welfare in fourteen counties.

Imagine the impact on child safety and well-being if families could access this support *without* having an open Child Welfare case. By creating a pathway for compensation that does not require a mental health diagnosis or an open Child Welfare case, SB 1074 opens the door to relevant, effective interventions. Agencies like Options, Catholic Community Services, and others are eager to participate in this project and will collaborate to ensure its success.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelli McKnight". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kelli McKnight, CEO

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