



March 28, 2023

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Tabitha Jensen and I represent New Avenues for Youth to testify in support of HB 2513.

New Avenues for Youth is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, community-based organization in Multnomah & Clackamas Counties. Our services for young people (ages 9-24) focus on the individual—their experiences, identities, needs, and goals—and helping them make positive change in their lives. This help includes Measure 110-funded peer support services for young people in the Portland Metro area who experience housing instability, child welfare involvement, trafficking, and other sexual exploitation. Nearly all of our participants have histories of significant childhood trauma and abuse, and many are actively using substances as a coping mechanism for challenging life circumstances.

New Avenues leverages trusting relationships to encourage young people to consider harm reduction practices, walk alongside youth as they move through stages of change, and provide linkage to treatment services once a participant is ready to explore a different way of life. Our Measure 110 peer services are focused on connecting youth to the most culturally-responsive recovery and prevention supports available, either within our organization and or through our Behavioral Health Resource Network (BHRN) partners. New Avenues also provides culturally-specific recovery and prevention supports for LGBTQIA2S+ youth and young adults through our programs The Living Room and SMYRC.

The rollout of Measure 110 services has been a challenging experience, particularly due to early administrative delays with grantmaking, contracting, and workforce capacity. We deeply value the Oregon Accountability Council's insights and perspectives from a place of lived experience; concurrently, we are encouraged by the efforts of HB 2513 to increase the Oregon Health Authority's role in the efficient administration of Measure 110 in partnership with the OAC. The streamlining of reporting, linkage, and referral pathways will be invaluable to grantees and those seeking recovery supports.

New Avenues for Youth endorses a fully funded behavioral health system for all Oregonians, including youth and young adults. This system now relies on the support services launched in 2022 through Measure 110 dollars. We urge you to continue protecting Measure 110 funding and to make the necessary investments in infrastructure and administrative coordination to ensure long-term viability.

Respectfully,

Tabitha Jensen
Deputy Director
P: 503-517-3979
E: tjensen@newavenues.org