



**Testimony in support of SB 1594-1
Improving safety of behavioral health workers**

February 12, 2024

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), representing CMHPs statewide who manage and provide behavioral health services for their communities, I would like to express our support for SB 1594-1 to establish a task force on improving safety of behavioral health workers and for the investment in grants to help behavioral health agencies improve workforce safety.

Public behavioral health system work is difficult, and we must protect our valuable workforce through safety protocols, appropriate staffing levels, and training, all of which will require additional funding. We look forward to working on these standards with our system partners and hope to use safety plans already in place as templates and learning opportunities to be shared across the public behavioral health system.

We urge your support of SB 1594-1.

Sincerely,

Cherryl L. Ramirez
Executive Director, AOCMHP