

Submitter: Dayna McErlean

On Behalf Of: Committee: Senate Committee

On Human Services Measure: SB1547

Your support for Oregon Senate Bill 1547 and its efforts to combat substance abuse among youth is desperately needed. With emphasis on the importance of timely and effective treatment aligns with the goals of the bill, particularly in providing minors with access to necessary care despite potential objections. This provision reflects a balanced approach that prioritizes the well-being of young individuals struggling with substance use disorders while also respecting parental involvement. Your advocacy for such initiatives contributes significantly to promoting the health and safety of Oregon's youth.

As a single parent, I have grappled with the daunting challenge of ensuring my now 16 year old son receives adequate treatment that he urgently needed for his substance misuse issues. Unfortunately, I had to resort to extreme measures, twice now, by arranging for him to receive treatment out of state. It's been a harrowing journey, one that I've had to navigate entirely on my own. I was unable to find any adequate local help or support when it was urgently needed.

Locally, I've encountered a distressing lack of support and assistance. The resources, facilities, and policies available are sorely inadequate for parents like myself facing the immense burden of addressing their child's substance misuse and abuse illness. It's disheartening to witness firsthand the severe limitations of our current system in providing the necessary support to families in desperate need.

The reality is that our system is severely broken and in dire need of comprehensive reevaluation to address the pressing issues at hand. Parents and their children are left to fend for themselves, grappling with the overwhelming challenges of substance abuse without adequate education, support or resources.

Continuously having to arrange for my son to receive treatment out of state is not a sustainable solution. It's physically, emotionally and financially draining, and it's clear that we need to prioritize helping our children right here at home. We cannot afford to overlook the urgent need for accessible and effective treatment options within our own communities.

It's time for meaningful change. We need a system that provides parents with the support they need to navigate these difficult circumstances and ensures that our children receive the care and treatment they deserve. Together, let's advocate for policies and resources that prioritize local support for youth substance abuse treatment, because our children's well-being and future depend on it.

Sincerely,

Dayna McErlean