



February 4, 2025

Chair Neron and Members of the Committee:

I'm writing in support of HB 2729, which provides critical resources that youth and their families across Oregon need now. Oregon is ranked 49th in the nation for youth mental Health. As a school counselor, I see it everyday through rampant behavior issues and high rates of chronic absenteeism.

I have had very personal experience with our SBHC: ten years ago, I worked with the district and our school administration to have a SBHC at our school. HB 2729 provides evidence-based resources that will be quickly available for schools to support youth mental and physical health. For example, a study conducted in Oregon found that youth are 10-21x more likely to seek mental health support at a school-based health center (SBHC). It isn't only about access: I have seen many students who would have missed school for physical/mental appointments because of getting to and from appointments. By having a SBHC, students are now in class instead of missing school.

I have been in education for thirty years and I have seen the need for physical and mental support increase over the years. I support this bill because our students' mental needs have become more complex and they need the support of SBHC.

I am passionate about SBHC so please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. Thank you for considering voting yes on HB 2729.

Sincerely,

Amy Henry  
School Counselor, Benson Polytechnic  
Board Chair, Oregon School Counseling Association  
[amyhenry@pps.net](mailto:amyhenry@pps.net); 503-916-5100 x88418