



1785 NE Sandy Blvd #300
Portland, OR 97232
youthrightsjustice.org
(503) 232-2540

To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Lisa Kay Williams, Supervising Attorney
lisa.k@youthrightsjustice.org

Re: HB 2804

Dear Chair Kropf, Vice-Chair Chotzen, Vice-Chair Wallan and Members of the Committee,

Youth, Rights & Justice, a non-profit public defense provider, has been dedicated exclusively to juvenile law for 50 years. Each year, we provide holistic, client-centered representation to hundreds of children, youth, and parents in Oregon's juvenile court system, including representation of young persons before the Juvenile Psychiatric Security Review Board. A "young person," as defined in the juvenile code, is a child found responsible for a delinquency act except for insanity.

As written, House Bill 2804 eliminates the juvenile panel and thereby eliminates board knowledge and expertise in child psychology, child psychiatry, the juvenile justice system, juvenile parole and probation, and juvenile law.

We understand that this is not the intent. Instead, the intent is to collapse the adult and juvenile panel into one panel with child psychological/juvenile law and adult psychological/criminal law areas of knowledge and expertise represented. Also, there is an intent to require cross discipline training, allowing board members to have the requisite knowledge and expertise to make decisions for both adults and children.

YRJ would support HB 2804 with amendments consistent with collapsing the panels into one panel, retaining statutory board positions with child psychological/juvenile law knowledge and expertise and requiring cross discipline training as needed.

Currently, the Psychiatric Security Review Board has two panels: an adult panel and a juvenile panel. The juvenile panel, as required by statute, includes:

- A psychiatrist certified in child psychiatry;
- A licensed psychologist experienced in child psychology and the juvenile justice system;
- A member with substantial experience in the processes of juvenile parole and probation;
- A lawyer with substantial experience in juvenile law practice, and
- A member of the public.

The panel makes decisions about critical aspects of a young person's life; where a young person lives, the treatment in which they must participate and the conditions they must follow. Children have unique needs and characteristics distinct from adults and therefore require specialized interventions. Although there are a limited number of young persons before the Board, they deserve understanding of their distinct needs.

We urge the committee to oppose HB 2804 in its current form and adopt amendments that would collapse the panels into one panel while retaining statutory board positions with child psychological/juvenile law areas of knowledge and expertise and require cross discipline training as needed.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical issue.