

Submitter: Amy Fellows  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Human Services  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB729

February 11, 2025

Senate Committee on Human Services  
RE: SB 729

Senator Gelser Blouin and members of the committee-

I am writing in support of SB 729 to ensure that individuals with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability (ID/DD) are not discriminated against when trying to access Mental Health services.

All too often individuals with ID/DD from the time they are young children and first diagnosed are put on a behavior modification track through practices like Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and even the Developmental Disability System (DDS) through ODDS and county DDS push parents to have a "Behavior Professional" involved. They do not require mental health support or encourage it. This is especially distressing since ABA is widely known to cause cPTSD and many Autistics who have experienced it as children are now speaking out against it. ABA is NOT mental health therapy and the under-trained staff working directly with children, the Behavior Techs are often trained as little as 30 hours and have no mental health training. More can be learned about this in the book *The Gold Star Fallacy of ABA: a Reference Guide for Therapists, Educators and Parents* by Speech Language Pathologist Julie Roberts, MS, CCC-SLP. (<https://therapistndc.org/connect-with-julie/>)

In 2020, the Department of Defense produced their study finding that ABA done for children of active duty military personnel was found to be either ineffective or harmful the majority of the time and chose to stop paying for the service. (<https://therapistndc.org/aba-is-not-effective-so-says-the-latest-report-from-the-department-of-defense/>)

I urge you to support SB729 to allow for greater mental health supports for the ID/DD population. An important factor is training mental health professionals on how to work with the ID/DD population. I am on the Oregon Office on Health and Disability at OHSU's WITH Grant Advisory Committee. They have an upcoming training for mental health providers:

Improving Mental Health Care Access: Successfully Including Patients with I/DD  
February 18th at 12 – 1:30pm

Registration link at: <https://www.ohsu.edu/oregon-office-on-disability-and-health/mental-health-provider-training-program>

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy Fellows, MPH  
Disability Justice and Family Advocate