

Submitter: James Mooney PhD
On Behalf Of: Oregon Independent Mental Health Practitioners
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB822

I wish to support passage of SB822. The aspirations of our legislative advocacy group, OIMHP, are to support health insurance benefits for patients with mental health difficulties, which are equivalent to those for patients seeking to use their physical health benefits. There is a long history in Oregon (and other states) of having fewer behavioral health providers being in-network with state insurers as compared to physical health providers. The reasons for this are many, but include poorer reimbursement and over-regulation of mental health benefits, which drive providers away from participating in-network with insurance plans. This makes mental health care more costly for consumers and creates obstacles to care. So, consumers seeking mental health care may give up trying to find a provider and experience a worsening of their mental health problems. SB 822 is designed to promote adequate networks for both physical and mental health care. Please support this bill to promote better mental health in Oregon..