

Submitter: Kathleen Zinno

On Behalf of: House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare

Measure, Appointment or Topic : HB 2023

February 11, 2025

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Healthcare  
RE: HB2023

Rep Nosse and members of the committee-

I am writing to strongly **oppose** HB 2023 which focuses on expanding coverage for ABA therapies in Oregon. ABA focuses on compliance training which has been shown to increase incidences of trauma in autistic children (later adults) who were able to speak out about it.

ABA therapy often requires parents to sign their kids up for 30-40 hours a week of therapy. It's offered as the only means of treatment, but it has nothing to do with effectiveness and is just another insurance complex profit machine. It was the first thing offered for my son when he was diagnosed with Autism and we have refused, instead opting to understand the WHY behind behaviors. We focus on co-regulation, environment modifications and giving him the tools necessary to advocate for himself.

This is not something to push on kids with epilepsy and down syndrome. ABA therapists have little training and no neurological or psychiatric background. There are states that use shock therapy to justify behavior modification.

Parents deserve more tools not less. We need more occupational, speech, and physical therapists who go to school to learn about the whole body. The wait lists to see these medical professionals can be upwards of 3-6 months, which is why we need more support not less.

Please don't outsource care to an industry focused on profits and compliance training over what's right for our kids.

Katie Zinno  
Patient Advocate