

Testimony in Support of HB 3339 Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
Representative Rob Nosse, Chair; Representatives Cyrus Javadi and Travis Nelson, Vice-Chairs
February 18, 2025

Testimony provided by:

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Bridget Klest, Ph.D., Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Clinical Training, Clinica Ph.D. Program, School of Psychological Science, Oregon State University

On behalf of the School of Psychological Science at Oregon State University, we write to explain how HB 3339 (PSYPACT) will benefit Oregonians. The passing of PSYPACT will significantly benefit the state of Oregon, and in particular the residents of Oregon that are in most need of mental health services in three ways:

1. Continuity of care,
2. Accessibility, and
3. Training opportunities for mental health professionals for future service in Oregon.

Continuity of care is a crucial component of successful mental health treatment, and PSYPACT will allow Oregon residents to continue with their provider in the event that they temporarily relocate to another state. Research suggests that continuing with the same provider is an important factor to the successful treatment of severe psychopathology. This legislation will allow Oregon residents the opportunity to overcome a significant impediment to successful care.

Second, the passing of PSYPACT will **make mental health services accessible** to many Oregon residents who would not otherwise be able to receive care, such as **residents in rural areas, those who speak languages other than English, and those with intellectual and other disabilities**. Research suggests that the lack of access to mental health services is one of the primary reasons that many individuals who are most in need of care do not receive it, and that this lack of accessibility leads to increasing rates of psychological disorders and related health conditions. Oregon has one of the highest gaps between mental health care need and available providers, and we especially lack licensed clinical psychologists.

Lastly, PSYPACT will **promote greater numbers of mental health providers working in Oregon** by **expanding training opportunities for students in graduate programs in the state**. This expansion will not only allow more Oregon residents to receive services by

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graduate students in these programs (at no cost or sliding scale rates) but will also increase the success of psychology programs in recruiting and training graduate students. This will increase the number of highly trained providers and specialists working in the state who will continue to meet the growing demand for mental health services.

As rates of depression, anxiety, and suicide have been rising in recent years, increased measures are needed to combat this growing health crisis. PSYPACT legislation would be a significant step in reversing these trends in Oregon. We are one of only eight states that has yet to pass this legislation. Oregonians should no longer be left out of the growing network of mental health services across the U.S., nor should our clinical psychology students continue to face unnecessary obstacles in training or licensure.

We urge you to support HB 3339 and ensure its passage.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by:

Tomas Yufik

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