

Written Testimony in Support of HB 3351: Enacting the Interstate Counseling Compact in Oregon

Dear Chair Nosse and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care,

My name is Josh Kanagy and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) practicing at a High School in Portland Oregon. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 3351, which would allow Oregon to join the Interstate Counseling Compact.

Support for the Counseling Compact

Thirty eight states have already passed legislation to join the compact, and Oregonians would benefit from joining as well. Here's the current Counseling Compact Map:

<https://counselingcompact.org/map/>

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) supports this compact (<https://www.votervoice.net/NBCCGrassroots/Campaigns/120886/Respond>), as does the Oregon Counseling Association (ORCA). According to the American Counseling Association, the counseling compact will “reduce barriers to interstate care by improving continuity of care, increasing accessibility for underserved communities, and providing military families with more flexibility.”:

<https://www.counseling.org/advocacy/counseling-compact>

Why This Matters to My Clients

In the last five years we have seen the need for mental health care skyrocket, and this has created access issues across our state. I have personally experienced significant difficulty and delay in referring my students to life-saving mental health treatment. In my previous job as a child and family mental health counselor, I lost multiple clients who moved “across the river” to Vancouver. Because my license was not honored in Washington, I could no longer legally care for these children. Joining the counseling compact, as Washington and many other states have done, would improve mental health care access and increase continuity of care for Oregonians.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Josh Kanagy, LPC