

Submitter: sarah bovee
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Early Childhood and Behavioral Health
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB691

My name is Sarah Bovee I am a person with lived experience within the interconnected realms of: Substance Use Disorder, Child Welfare Interventions (as a child and as an adult) homelessness, and domestic violence. I have experienced Birth Trauma and harm to my family from Addiction related stigma and discrimination in both medical care and in Child Welfare Case Management. I have 3 generations of poverty related trauma and have an ACES score of 9/10. I am a person that has utilized MOUD as a means of support to arrest symptoms of addiction. I have had my Parental Rights terminated to 2/4 of my children. My mother died from a heroin overdose when I was 15. I dropped out of high school and had a felony charge on my record as a minor.

I also graduated College with honors, am a Certified Medical Assistant and Phlebotomist- worked as an Xray Tech and Sterile Field Tech. I opened my own coffee stand, volunteered to help clean up the streets of my city and connect those suffering to services. I went through the program of N/A held service positions, worked the steps- made amends and patched up relationships. I shared strength experience and hope that We Do Recover for 8 years in mutual support meetings. I was prescribed pain medication which led to a relapse of which I lost everything. I got pregnant again and utilized MOUD to overcome the struggles of an opiate addiction. I was able to keep my child- this time around I was offered housing and many "community supports" including a Doula, a Peer Support Specialist, a legal ally- while this was in Washington state- the supports were very much like Oregon's Nurture Programs.

Had I not been wrapped in these services I can guarantee you Child Welfare would have once again looked at my negative history instead of my strengths and taken my child from me. It was all of these agencies that I trusted- coming from a place of support rather than surveillance that could attest to my efforts- they advocated for me at tables that historically I felt unheard and victimized at. They committed to following me through from being completely vulnerable and afraid in the throes of active addiction to being in a stable home, living a healthy productive life in which I am caring for my children and healing generational cycles.

Since reclaiming my recovery, I now have another 4 years to add to the 8 years of foundational recovery in which I claimed a decade ago. I have had the honor to move to Oregon and land a job with Project Nurture. I am a Certified Peer Wellness Specialist and Doula. I have all- I repeat ALL my children in my life, and we are at a

various active intentional stage of healing. While this testimony highlights the ups and downs of my life and ends with a positive, I assure you that the struggles along the way have cause many wounds some obvious but many unseen- not just to me but to every person that loves me as well as to the most vulnerable children that I brought into this world. I had one wish for all my kids and that is that I get to protect them so that they can run, learn, enjoy and explore this world without outside interventions taking away that innocence.

Children who are removed from their parents are “overwhelmed with feelings of abandonment, rejection, worthlessness, guilt, and helplessness.” I too was removed from my mother when I was a child. It has taken me a long time to reclaim my worth- It took hearing other people look at me with respect and dignity- encouraging me to take charge of my narrative and teaching me that I deserve happiness. Project Nurture wraps this very vulnerable population in the kind of trauma informed, person centered, success affirming supports that gives them a fighting chance to recover.

Please take this into consideration in regard to this Omnibus package. We need more staff and more infrastructure. Our future depends on it and our people deserve it.

Thank You