

**Chair Reardon, Vice Chairs Alonso Leon and Whisnant, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is Samantha Georgi, and I am writing today to support HB 3129, which invests in Oregon's behavioral health workforce. As a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Intern at Oregon State University, I am directly impacted by the policies and funding that support mental health education and workforce development.

Oregon is facing a **severe shortage of behavioral health professionals**, leaving many communities without access to critical mental health services. HB 3129 provides **targeted funding** to support education, training, and workforce expansion, ensuring that more professionals—including students like me—can enter and **remain** in the field.

### **Why HB 3129 Matters**

- **Workforce Shortages Must Be Addressed**  
Oregon's demand for mental health services is growing, yet access remains limited due to workforce shortages furthered by inaccessibility to higher education. This bill will help build a stronger pipeline of qualified professionals.
- **Reducing Barriers for Students and Future Providers**  
Financial burdens, lack of internship opportunities, and unclear career pathways often discourage students from entering or staying in behavioral health fields. HB 3129 provides funding for education, training, and supervision, making it more feasible for students to complete their training and enter the workforce.
- **Improving Diversity and Expanding Access to Underserved Communities**  
Investing in education and workforce expansion has a proven impact on diversifying the mental health field, which in turn improves service accessibility for historically underserved communities.

I am committed to becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor, and I urge this committee to invest in the future of behavioral health in Oregon by passing HB 3129. This bill will make a tangible difference in expanding access to mental health services across the state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Sincerely,**  
Samantha Georgi

Oregon State University