

Submitter: Amal Ortiz
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB61

Dear Members of the Committee,

I'm a clinical social worker and trauma therapist in Oregon, and I'm writing in strong support of Senate Bill 61. As someone who provides care to Medicaid clients—many of whom have experienced complex trauma, systemic oppression, and marginalization—I've seen firsthand how OHA's audit practices create unnecessary barriers to care and threaten the viability of small practices like the one I work at.

OHA's current approach to audits is punitive, not corrective. Small clerical errors—like a missing modifier code or a documentation discrepancy—should not result in massive clawbacks that jeopardize providers' ability to stay in business. The retroactive and extrapolated penalties imposed by OHA do not reflect the reality of service delivery, where therapy did happen, clients were seen, and care was provided. Yet, OHA's audits often disregard this, treating administrative mistakes as fraud and penalizing providers for issues that could be solved with better training and clearer guidance.

Passing this bill is essential because it ensures that audits are based on evidence, not technicalities. It prevents OHA from using extrapolation to multiply minor errors into catastrophic financial losses and holds them accountable for using reasonable, documented proof that services occurred. This isn't about evading responsibility—it's about ensuring that providers can continue serving vulnerable communities without fear of financial ruin over minor mistakes.

I urge you to pass this bill and protect the providers who are already underpaid, overburdened, and stretched thin trying to meet the needs of Oregon's most underserved populations. OHA's audit practices should be about accountability, not punishment. This bill is a step in the right direction.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amal Ortiz
MSW, CSWA
Narrowing the Gap