



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 2474
HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 26, 2025

My name is Mae Lee Browning, Legislative Director of the Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. I testify on behalf of OCDLA in opposition to HB 2474.

Sections 1 and 2 seek to redefine familial relationships. We agree with ODAA that our families are wonderfully diverse and complex. OCDLA notes that it is ironic that ODAA wants to expand familial definitions in HB 2474 but opposes the expansion of familial definitions in HB 2555, the Family Sentencing Alternative Program (FSAP).

Because HB 2474 would expand the familial definitions for some first-degree sex crimes, this would make more people subject to Measure 11 sentences. This is “definitional creep” into Measure 11.

It is also problematic when you introduce “sexually intimate partner” into the mix. Does that mean someone a person had sex with for a couple weeks? Twice? Someone they lived with? Common law spouse? It could be anything in that range. Appellate attorneys would certainly litigate this term over and over. We suggest either removing that term or using a more defined term. We appreciate the removal of “former spouse” and “formerly sexual intimate partner.”

OCDLA is highly concerned about section 6, raising the age of the victim from 10 to 14 years old for felony strangulation. There is no age requirement for the offender. So kids who engage in this behavior could be subject to a C felony charge. Is this really what the Oregon Legislature wants? Even if this language was amended to specify the age of the offender, I submit that Oregon should not support this change.

Mae Lee Browning
Legislative Director
Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association¹

¹ OCDLA’s 1,200 members statewide include public defense providers, private bar attorneys, investigators, experts, and law students. Our attorneys represent Oregon’s children and parents in juvenile dependency proceedings, youth in juvenile delinquency proceedings, adults in criminal proceedings at the trial and appellate level, as well as civil commitment proceedings throughout the state of Oregon. Our mission is championing justice, promoting individual rights, and supporting the legal defense community through education and advocacy.