



February 27, 2025

To: Chair Hartman and members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding **House Bill 3224**, sponsored by Representative Nathanson.

This submission is on behalf of Options Counseling and Family Services. Options provides integrated co-occurring disorders treatment, mental health interventions, family preservation services, psychiatry, and intensive outpatient treatment for youth at risk of higher levels of care. The agency provides services in 14 Oregon Counties, including serving Oregon Health Plan members and children, youth, and families referred through the Oregon Department of Human Services.

To meet the needs of Oregon's children, youth, adults, and families, Options and other social service agencies recruit qualified applicants for direct service positions. As required by statute, passing a Department of Human Services background check is required before a new employee may begin providing services.

House Bill 3224 seeks to expedite and streamline this requirement

- Review of required background checks, including similarities and variations;
- Report on options to consolidate and reduce the number of background checks for similar purposes or programs; and
- Submit a report with recommendations for legislation.

Please join me and other behavioral health agencies in supporting House Bill 3224. A review of the background check requirements, with the goal of clarity and consolidation, will support the behavioral health and social service workforce in their efforts to meet the needs of Oregonians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelli McKnight".

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