

Submitter: Katie Kotsovos  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2029

Dear Chairman Noose and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health Care:

I'm a born-and-raised Oregonian and have been a practicing therapist in the state for more than 10 years.

I'm writing this letter in enthusiastic support of HB2029 to remedy the way that insurance audits are currently abusive, unfair and limit access to care for the people of Oregon.

Currently, insurers do not provide clear, if any, guidelines of what to include on documentation or claims, yet they have the power to clawback payments if they find things they don't like in audit—things they have never told us about! As a professional in this field, I know how to assess and document the needs for medically necessary services. I know how to apply evidence-based practices to help my clients heal and help them wrap up therapy when they've met their goals. What I don't know how to do is read the minds of insurance auditors who are incentivized by big corporations to cut costs, not to support the needs of Oregonians.

It is a source of persistent and intense stress knowing that even though I submitted an insurance claim that was accepted and paid, the insurer could try at any time in the future to clawback funds. Conventional wisdom among therapists is to diversify your caseload (don't take too many clients from one insurer) to guard against the potential financial impact of an audit, meaning we may turn away clients to protect ourselves. Many therapists in the profession choose to see only cash-paying clients for this reason; this puts services out of reach for many folks, especially those who may need a sought-after specialist. And frankly, this instability has caused me to consider leaving the profession, which plenty of excellent therapists do.

It feels also worth noting that folks in the profession are helpers—the members of society (such as teachers and other healthcare workers) who are so often expected to put aside their own needs for safety and compensation to care for others, particularly those who have been disregarded and abused by the same system. This is gross exploitation of people who do the most tender, necessary work in our community.

This is long overdue. Please support HB2029.

Sincerely,  
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