

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

Dear Chair Nosse and Members of the Committee,

I am a LCSW practicing in Oregon and a member of the Western Oregon Mental Health Alliance (WOMHA). I am writing in support of HB 2029 because health insurance audits and clawbacks place significant burden on behavioral health providers, which creates downstream negative effects on Oregonians who need behavioral health care. Current Oregon law allows insurers too much leeway and significantly disadvantages solo behavioral health providers and small practices. HB 2029 makes sensible reforms to the law that will support behavioral health providers who want to take insurance and increase access to behavioral health care for all Oregonians. Please vote to move HB 2029 forward.

As a solo private practice clinician, I have experienced a \$40,000 pay cut over the last year from one insurance company alone. The options given to me were to accept the decreased rate or to have my contract not be renewed. I have been audited for using the 90837 code several times by another insurance company. Each audit requires several hours of time to justify the additional time to appropriately serve the client in need. In the end, clients are not able to get the services that they need because of insurance companies requiring or citing only one code as "best practice" 90834. My hope is that there will be oversight to stop these practices from occurring by moving SB 2029 forward.