

Submitter: Laura Birchard

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 Laura Birchard, MA LPC practicing in Portland, OR and a member of the Oregon Counseling Association. 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. As a clinician, I feel that accepting insurance is important ethically to allow for access to mental and behavioral health services. However, I have witness so many instances of clawbacks or audits impacting clinicians that they no longer are able to work with insurance companies. I support this bill because I would like to continue offering services that are accessible. Please vote to move HB 2029 forward.

Sincerely,

Laura Birchard, MA LPC CADCI