

My name is Anthony Biglan. I am a senior scientist at Oregon Research Institute, though I do not speak for that organization in these comments.

I am a prevention scientist and a former president of the Society for Prevention Research. Over the past forty years I have done numerous studies identifying risk factors for the development all of the most common and costly problems of human behavior as well as at least ten randomized controlled trials that identified effective preventive interventions.

I am generally in favor of all three of the bills involving prevention [list here]

However, I see several ways that they could be strengthened.

1. The focus on preventing substance use should be broadened to target the prevention of all the problems that develop in childhood and adolescence. This is because a singular focus on substance use ignores the fact that substance use is closely related to most other problems. A study we did of more than 10,000 Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> graders showed that a student who engaged in antisocial behavior or risky sexual behavior, or was depressed, was very likely to be using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Trying to prevent substance use without addressing related problems, will have limited impact. Comprehensive prevention is needed to effectively prevent multiple problems.
2. The bedrock of effective prevention is the provision of evidence-based prevention programs for families and schools. A sixteen year study in Pennsylvania, which implemented dozens of evidence-based family and school interventions through that state showed that Pennsylvania significantly reduced youth substance and related problems. During that same period of time, Oregon made little progress in reducing substance use. And a thorough study Oregon schools showed that few of them were implementing evidence based programs.
3. My understanding is that ODE cannot require schools to implement specific prevention programs. However, I am unaware of a prohibition on their listing the many evidence-based interventions that would make a huge difference in the lives of young people.
4. Unfortunately, my reading of the ODE input on programs like social emotional learning (which has value in preventing problems) describes useful principles, but does not describe well validated programs such as the Good Behavior Game and Cooperative learning.

In sum, the legislation would be stronger if it explicitly called for identifying evidence based school and family programs and monitoring the extent to which these programs are reaching families and youth.