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On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3835

Below is a short opposition paper to Oregon House Bill (HB) 3835, based on the information you provided:

NO on HB 3835!!

****Opposition to Oregon House Bill 3835: A Threat to Children's Safety****

Oregon House Bill (HB) 3835, currently advancing through a legislative committee, represents a dangerous step backward in protecting the state's most vulnerable children. Crafted under the auspices of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), this bill undermines critical safeguards by limiting sexual abuse investigations, weakening laws on seclusion and restraint in schools, and permitting foster youth to be housed in homeless shelters alongside adults, including drug addicts and sexual predators. Far from improving child welfare, HB 3835 endangers kids and must be stopped.

First, the bill's restriction on sexual abuse investigations is indefensible. Reducing scrutiny of such allegations risks leaving victims unprotected and predators unaccountable. Foster children, already traumatized by instability, deserve rigorous oversight—not a system that turns a blind eye to their cries for help. By curtailing these investigations, HB 3835 prioritizes administrative convenience over justice and safety.

Second, gutting laws on seclusion and restraint in schools is a direct attack on vulnerable students, particularly those with disabilities. These practices, when misused, cause physical and emotional harm, yet HB 3835 seeks to loosen accountability. Schools should be sanctuaries for learning, not places where children fear unchecked discipline. This rollback betrays Oregon's commitment to equitable education and child well-being.

Most alarming, the proposal to place foster youth in homeless shelters exposes them to unthinkable risks. Shelters, often overcrowded and under-resourced, are not designed for children. Housing foster kids alongside adults—some struggling with addiction or harboring predatory intent—invites exploitation, abuse, and trauma. The state's duty is to shield foster youth, not abandon them to environments where their safety cannot be guaranteed.

DHS may argue these changes address systemic pressures, but efficiency cannot

come at the cost of children's lives. HB 3835 doesn't solve problems—it creates them, shifting burdens onto those least equipped to bear them. Oregon must reject this bill and uphold its moral obligation to protect every child. We urge lawmakers and the public to act swiftly: stop HB 3835 before it harms the very kids it claims to serve.