



March 19, 2025

Oregon State Legislature  
House Committee on Early Childhood & Human Services  
900 Court Street NE Salem, OR 97301  
Submitted electronically via OLIS

Chair Hartman, Vice-Chair Nguyen, Vice-Chair Scharf, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Adam Rodakowski, Director of Foster Care at Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI). GOBHI is a nonprofit behavioral health and social services organization serving the Eastern Oregon region and beyond. We manage the Oregon Health Plan Behavioral health and non-emergent medical transportation benefits on behalf of Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (EOCCO) and facilitate community engagement through twelve Local Community Health Partnerships and one Community Advisory Council. We also deliver various services statewide, including Treatment Foster Care (TFC) supporting children in Child Welfare custody. For more information, visit: [gobhi.org](http://gobhi.org)

**I'm writing today in support of House Bill 3835, ACT for Kids - Access to care and treatment.**

**Since July 2020, the access to treatment services placements (TFC and BRS Residential Treatment) for children in Child Welfare custody has reduced by more than 60% (195 fewer children per day), including an 85% reduction in access to residential care placements.** Children need the right care, in the right place, at the right time. When children are unable to access care, the system fails to provide them with an equitable chance to achieve their full potential.

The child-serving workforce in both foster care and residential treatment have been diminished due to unintended consequences of legislation that have made access to care unavailable to many Oregon youth. I am including a quote below from a former staff member, who recently stopped working with youth under our program. While she does not wish to have her name on the record, she is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Oregon reflecting on an incident and investigation that shaped her decision to change her career:

***“Sometimes in my job you felt like you were damned if you do, damned if you don’t. If I didn’t restrain the child on the highway that child could have been injured or killed. I would have been investigated for child abuse as a result. I chose to restrain the child and try to keep them safe in the moment and was investigated for child abuse as a result. The investigation was returned unsubstantiated, but it felt like a losing battle with the only safe and protected situation for me being to choose not to work with these young people. When staff and foster parents choose to not work with these youth, it doesn’t support the children and rather makes the system more desperate and higher risks arise as a result. “***

The current regulatory environment results in higher staff turnover, and constant staffing challenges for programs that care for our children. Foster parents and staff at treatment facilities are leaving these roles because of concerns of being investigated, and possibly unjustly founded as child abusers.

Passing House Bill 3835 is the first step to improving the System of Care for children in Oregon. This bill keeps children safe, increases access to care, supports workforce stability, and begins to move away from a fear based system to one that is focused on improving access to quality care for children.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Rodakowski', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Adam Rodakowski, MSW  
Director of Foster Care  
Greater Oregon Behavioral Health Inc.