



TO: Oregon House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services
FROM: Tony Vezina, 4D Recovery
RE: House Bill 3835

Dear Chair Hartman, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee,

As an Executive Director serving adolescents with behavioral health needs, a working partner with the System of Care Advisory Council, and a father of a child with complex disabilities, I fully support HB 3835.

4D Recovery has a history of providing peer services to adolescents and young adults since 2012. As a co-founding member and a young person in recovery at the time, we saw the need for youth-centric services. Since that time, we have expanded our peer service mission, and through this, we have witnessed a barren landscape of youth services for behavioral health, especially residential treatment facilities. Initially, we believed the driving factor was a lack of funding, but we discovered that restrictive regulations and oppressive oversight disincentivized expansion in this sector.

As such, I determined it was not feasible to expand our services to treatment and residential care until last year, due to coordinated efforts between the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission, the System of Care Advisory Council, and trade associations such as The Oregon Alliance and the Oregon Council on Behavioral Health.

Working with children is a labor of love, but it is not for everyone. There are special people willing to operate these programs that serve our most vulnerable populations, and we need to ensure that the pursuit of safety does not result in subjugation.

I speak from the perspective of a parent of a special needs daughter who is currently in Virginia receiving the care she needs to be successful. There are very few programs that can support my daughter's condition: she is severely autistic, non-verbal, and at times violent and self-injurious. The people who care for her are under immense stress due to her condition and

the safety requirements. I wonder why there are no care facilities in Oregon that can support her, but I suspect it is due to over-regulation.

I want my daughter to be safe, but I also understand that incidents occur due to her behaviors, and I would never want the people who care for her to be too scared of unfortunate, yet innocent, situations that could transform into state indictments of abuse and neglect. This is why I fully support this bill, which brings forth sensible concepts that create safety, support workers, and advance access to critical care.

Sincerely,

Tony Vezina
Executive Director, 4D Recovery
Parent of Bella