



Hello Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services,

I am Blair Stenvick, representing Basic Rights Oregon. As a statewide LGBTQ+ advocacy organization, BRO has serious concerns about possible implications of Senate Bill 989. Youth mental illness and addiction are, unfortunately, very real issues in Oregon, and we applaud the Legislature for continuing to seek solutions. However, SB 989 is not the answer.

Taking away a young person's consent to be institutionalized will cause more trauma for already vulnerable kids, and could open the door for misconduct and abuse behind closed doors. Furthermore, there's a deep bench of research and data showing that involuntary treatment for addiction is ineffective and dangerous. As one study summarizes: "Involuntary interventions for substance use disorders are less effective and potentially more harmful than voluntary treatment, and involuntary centers often serve as venues for abuse." (Source: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7006027/>)

Additionally, this bill would require the state to use fiscal resources to build and maintain youth involuntary commitment facilities that do not currently exist. Given the mental health and addiction crisis in Oregon, those funds could be more effectively spent on supporting people who want and need help.

LGBTQ+ young people, as well as youth of color, are more likely to struggle with mental health and addiction issues. Rather than involuntarily committing vulnerable young people, let's work together to find more humane and effective solutions. Please do not advance SB 989.

Thank you,

Blair Stenvick (they/he)  
Basic Rights Oregon