



March 25, 2025

House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2059**

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chair Javadi, Vice-Chair Nelson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Julie Ibrahim, and I am the CEO of New Narrative. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit based in Tigard, with locations in both Multnomah and Washington Counties. New Narrative provides integrated mental health, residential, and peer services at over 40 locations for over 2,000 people each year. Our residential programs span the full housing continuum, from licensed residential treatment facilities to supported and independent housing. Our goal is simple: we want to help people thrive, not just survive, by providing them with the tools they need to succeed in their mental health journeys.

I also serve as the President of the Tri-County Behavioral Health Providers Association and a board member of the Oregon Council for Behavioral Health. I would like to urge you to strongly support HB 2059 and to urge you to make a meaningful investment in expanding residential behavioral health capacity in Oregon.

The recent study commissioned by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has finally given us a clearer picture of the number of residential behavioral health beds needed across the state. OHA now even has a dashboard to track our progress. But while we have this information, we must act. The current system has too much “churn” – people are being moved around because we simply don’t have the right placement available when needed. We can’t afford to wait any longer. If we don’t build the necessary capacity now, this churn will continue, and we’ll be stuck in this cycle of inefficiency, unable to meet the demand for services.

The good news is that we have providers around Oregon, including New Narrative, who are ready to build more capacity and expand services right now. In the last 15 months, our agency has opened three new residential treatment facilities in the Portland Metro area, bringing a total of over 30 new beds into the system. But despite this growth, our own licensed residential treatment facilities are currently at 100% capacity. We need to do more.



We know firsthand how critical it is for our community to have additional residential treatment options. This bill provides an opportunity to help meet that need. We are committed to expanding our facilities and increasing the availability of services, ensuring that people who need them most are placed in the right programs, without unnecessary delays.

The amendment to HB 2059 establishes the Residential Behavioral Health Capacity Program through OHA, which will prioritize funding for projects like ours that are ready to build and expand capacity. The \$90 million appropriation is a step in the right direction. New capacity will enable us to reduce wait times, improve placement, and provide better care for those who need it most.

If the legislature invests in this capacity now, New Narrative is committed to bringing another 10-bed Residential Treatment Facility online to serve Multnomah County as soon as possible. We are currently finalizing site selection and with our expertise can move quickly to staff and open a new facility if funds are made available.

Thank you for considering this. I urge you to support HB 2059 and invest in the future of mental health care in Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Ibrahim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Julie" and last name "Ibrahim" clearly distinguishable.

Julie Ibrahim, CEO