

March 26, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services  
FROM: Grace Fortson, Our Children Oregon  
SUBJECT: Support for SB 1113

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Grace Fortson, I am the Policy and Advocacy Manager with Our Children Oregon (OCO). OCO is a statewide nonprofit committed to whole child wellbeing through the Children's Agenda- a comprehensive legislative agenda created and supported by our over 135 member organizations across the state.

I am here today in support of SB 1113. It is OCO's firm belief that just as children need protection from threats like illness or natural disasters, they also need protection against systems, institutions, and even helping professionals. This bill clarifies those protections to support our helping professionals to understand the law clearly without sacrificing the safety of our children.

Specifically, this bill clarifies instances that require hotline reporting, clarifies definitions of seclusion and restraint, and clarifies when out of state placement is acceptable. This will alleviate some of the pressure and confusion experienced by providers and regulators. Sometimes medically necessary care is most accessible out of state, and this bill clarifies that the health of the child must be prioritized in those situations.

Additionally, I'd like to point out that this bill will be in line with national standards put forth by the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act (recently passed into law)<sup>1</sup>. This is imperative in ensuring that our state does not fall behind on national regulatory standards.

Lastly, in any case of definitional conflict, I'd like to invite the committee to defer to the Jurisdiction Advisory Committee that was tasked with defining child abuse, mandated reporters, and more in HB 4086. Given that there is already a committee working on best-practices in this area, it is important that this bill not create any conflict with definitions they are tasked with researching and creating.

Thank you,

Grace Fortson, Policy and Advocacy Manager, Our Children Oregon

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/merkleys-bipartisan-stop-institutional-child-abuse-act-now-law/>