

Oregon 2025 Regular Session

Written Testimony

submitting testimony for HB 2467: “Defines “dangerous to self,” “dangerous to others” and “serious physical harm” for the purpose of involuntarily committing a person with mental illness.”

The purpose of My statement is just to say that involuntarily committing a person with mental illness can be a serious first step in slandering the reputation of a person.

Involuntary commitment can lead to the removal of a person’s rights to be involved in making decisions about their own health, which erodes trust between individuals and the people who want to help them.

My first commitment to a psychiatric hospital, which happened in New York State, was an involuntarily commitment, and many years later, my reputation is still not repaired. It is very hard to refute or deny a hospitalization, unless others can be persuaded that the decisions of some medical professionals be called into question, and that is not easily done.

Also, whether or not a person poses a danger to themselves or others is oftentimes a matter of opinion.

The aim of NAMI Oregon seems to be that civil commitment be sought, before a person will be recruited by the sometimes more cruel criminal justice system. I stand by that idea, but send the warning that involuntary commitment, and easing the standards for it to take place especially in the case for “first timers”, should be used as a last resort.