

Submitter: Tony Greiner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2467

My name is Tony Greiner, and I live in Portland. My brother-in-law, a good man I've known for 40 years, has a severe form of bipolar disorder.

Before his illness became disabling, he held a good job managing a construction crew. My sister witnessed his first psychotic break when she came home to him standing on a table, poking his finger deep into his eye and saying, "This doesn't hurt!" He ran to his pickup and drove away.

Over the next three days, he had no contact with his wife or other family members. He spent all the money from their bank account. He got into several fights, had at least one accident in the truck, and threatened to kill a public official. When his truck needed maintenance he went to a garage, where mechanics recognized he was in psychosis. They were able to reach my sister, and together they were able to get him committed for inpatient care.

This all happened in Texas. I've become acutely aware that my brother-in-law would have been forced to become much sicker—dangerously sicker—before the appropriate level of care would have been available for him in Oregon.

My brother-in-law is stable now and doing well. That wasn't going to be possible without medical intervention, and he wasn't well enough to seek the level of care he needed without an involuntary intervention. Think about this: TEXAS provides better protection for people with mental illness than Oregon.

Harm is required—not prevented—by Oregon's current laws. Please pass this legislation to make access to treatment more reasonable and prevent avoidable crises and deaths in families like mine.