

Submitter: Judy Tuttle Zollner
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB824

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

I am a therapist practicing in Salem and I am a member of the Western Oregon Mental Health Alliance (WOMHA). I am writing in support of SB 824 with the -1 amendment to allow the Department of Consumer and Business Services to continue collecting important data from insurers on behavioral health parity as required by HB 3046 (2021).

In the past my reimbursement rates from some insurance companies were stagnant. Some insurers even decreased my rates, which made me question how sustainable it would be to stay in network as the cost of living continues to increase. [Consider adding a personal story about how you were affected by this issue, financially and/or emotionally.]

Since the passage of HB 3046 in 2021, I have seen reimbursement increases for the first time in many years. These increases have made it more sustainable to stay in network and provide services to clients with varying financial means. [Consider speaking to how this fits with your professional values and/or how the rate increases have affected you personally.]

Allowing the HB 3046 reporting requirements to end would allow some insurers to return to their previous practices of undervaluing behavioral health services and operating with inadequate behavioral health networks, which effectively discriminates against their members with behavioral health conditions. Please pass SB 824 with the -1 amendment to keep insurance company practices transparent and protect access to behavioral health care.

Respectfully, Judy Tuttle Zollner, Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)