

April 3, 2025

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

As your constituent, I urge you to oppose HB2467.

This bill seeks to expand legal definitions such as “dangerous to self,” “dangerous to others,” and “serious physical harm” for civil commitment proceedings.

For many reasons, I oppose this bill.

- Civil commitments substantially disrupt lives, generally impeding human and civil rights.
- Warehousing people in crowded, understaffed, underfunded institutions and forcing treatment without individualized, trauma sensitive care is fraught with opportunities for abuse, harm, neglect, moral injury, dehumanization, compassion fatigue, burnout, trauma and worse as history has taught us. If you don’t know or don’t remember how bad institutionalization can devolve to, watch video footage on Willowbrook in New York which Kennedy called a “snake pit,” when he visited in 1963 before it was exposed on TV in 1972.
- Locking people up in institutions “in case” something “may or may not” happen based on unscientific speculation is no better than a coin toss and ripe for bias, prejudice, discrimination.
- Locking people up can be terribly expensive – it’s roughly \$40,000 per MONTH per person at the Oregon State Hospital (nearly \$500,000 per year). It can costs roughly \$40,000 per year to hold someone in jail or prison, \$3,000 to \$10,000 per day at a community hospital.
- Oregon already faces critical shortages in psychiatric beds, mental health professionals, crisis services, affordable housing and more. Increasing the number of individuals subject to involuntary commitment would likely further exacerbate delays in treatment, overcrowded facilities, and strain the already strained systems.

Thus, this bill does not solve the issues and could worsen the situation and outcomes.

Also consider existing laws such as:

- **Olmstead v. L.C. (1999)** – The Supreme Court held that unjustified institutionalization of individuals with mental illness violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). HB 2467 risks non-compliance with this ruling by encouraging unnecessary hospitalization over community-based care.
 - **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (1990) (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.)** – Prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including mental illness. Forced institutionalization without exploring less restrictive alternatives could violate this federal law.
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Instead of expanding involuntary commitment, the Legislature should:

- **Increase funding for voluntary outpatient mental health care** to prevent crises before they escalate.
- **Expand mobile crisis response teams** to de-escalate situations without unnecessary hospitalization.
- **Improve housing and social support services** for individuals with mental illness, addressing the root causes of many crisis situations.

HB 2467 is **not the solution** Oregon needs. It **threatens civil liberties, diverts resources away from effective care, and risks further overloading a broken system**. Expanding involuntary commitment without sufficient safeguards, infrastructure, or funding for alternative care **violates legal precedents and constitutional rights**.

I respectfully request that you **vote NO on HB 2467** and instead prioritize policies that genuinely improve mental health care in Oregon **without resorting to unnecessary and unjustified involuntary commitment**.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Misaras

Resident of Oregon