

“ Nothing About Us Without Us! ”

– James Charlton, Activist



OCSC

Oregon Consumer Survivor Coalition * c/o Rebecca Edens

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EIN# 2 6 – 1 2 5 2 4 9 7

Rebecca Edens
Tillamook, Oregon

April 5, 2025

RE: HB 2467

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Rebecca Edens, and I am writing in strong opposition to House Bill 2467 based on protections clearly outlined in the Oregon Constitution. As an Oregonian deeply committed to the preservation of our state's constitutional values, I find it imperative to address the significant constitutional concerns raised by this legislation.

HB 2467 expands involuntary commitment criteria by allowing subjective assessments and speculative predictions of potential future behaviors. Such broad discretion directly conflicts with Article I, Section 9 of the Oregon Constitution, which firmly guarantees the right of all Oregonians to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures, including unjustified involuntary confinement. The Oregon Constitution demands clear and immediate evidence of actual danger, not mere speculation or predictions about possible future actions. This smack of a dystopian future where people are arrested based on their thoughts rather than their actual actions. If this statute is adopted, that future is now.

If HB 2467 is passed, you're basically saying that Oregonians with mental health conditions *do not* have the same constitutional rights as other Oregonians.

Furthermore, HB 2467 permits the reliance on past behaviors to justify present involuntary confinement, which stands in stark contradiction to the principle of due process explicitly protected by Article I, Section 10 of the Oregon Constitution. Every individual has the right to fair and impartial treatment under the law, free from perpetual suspicion or ongoing restraint based solely on historical behavior without clear evidence of present risk.

Additionally, HB 2467's automatic restrictions on firearm ownership for individuals subject to involuntary commitment neglect the necessary protections of Article I, Section 27 of the Oregon Constitution, which explicitly secures the right of individuals to bear arms in defense of themselves. This bill undermines constitutional rights by applying sweeping restrictions without individualized, evidence-based assessments.

Again, if HB 2467 is passed, you're basically saying that Oregonians with mental health conditions *do not* have the same constitutional rights as other Oregonians.

The strength of our constitutional protections lies in their application to all Oregonians, regardless of circumstance or perceived future threat. True justice and effective mental health care cannot be built on coercion and constitutional infringements; instead, they must prioritize voluntary, respectful, community-based support systems.

I urge you, as guardians of our state's constitution and the rights of every Oregonian, to reject HB 2467 and to uphold the principles of liberty, dignity, and due process that our constitution demands.

For your review I am re-submitting my testimony (next page) from 2019 because HB 2467 is just yet another try to violate the human rights, civil rights and constitutional rights of select Oregonians who have been diagnosed and labeled as being “mentally ill.” In addition, as others have testified in opposition to this bill, it does nothing to change the broken behavioral health system that exists in Oregon.

Most appreciatively yours,

Rebecca Edens (electronically signed)

Rebecca Edens, B.A.

President

Oregon Consumer Survivor Coalition

Testimony from 2019

Rebecca Edens
Tillamook, Oregon

March 18, 2019

RE: Testimony in Opposition regarding SB762 & SB763

Dear Chair Sen. Floyd Prozanski, Vice Chair Kim Thatcher, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Good morning my name is Rebecca Edens and I reside in Tillamook, Oregon. I serve as President of the Oregon Mental Health Consumer and Psychiatric Survivor Coalition. I am a former state employee who worked at the Oregon State Hospital a Recovery Specialist and Advocate. Through the years, I have served on numerous advisory boards and task forces, advocating for positive change in Oregon's service delivery system. As a private citizen and professional, I have sat with literally multiples of 100's of Oregonians through their human distress directly related to their experiences as service users and professionals who even as I testify are being traumatized and marginalized right now for speaking up regarding abuse and neglect in a fractured system of care.

I am a native Oregonian and American citizen, a Human Being, Labeled by the Government in Violation of My Civil Rights as "Being" not just "Having" Mental Illness. I thought I had certain and inalienable rights to life and liberty. I found out that was not true – not for my Native American ancestors who were enslaved and killed, not for people of color, not for people who are gay, lesbian, and/or transgender, not for people with disabilities. Many have worked diligently for social justice to right those wrongs.

Of course we will never all agree with each other's points of views or what we should do to fix society or this Broken system of so called "care" but we can start by telling the truth. We must passionately – with one Voice – UNITE around one thing, and that is basic human rights. Especially Oregonians! I am here to bear witness. We are a People Group: the "psychiatrically labeled" who have had our rights violated for decades. We span all ages. We are every color and race. We have self-determined identities. We are the people that society and the system have labeled "Being Mental Illness" whose rights are, and have been, violated. I am here to bear witness to our collective suffering, involuntary treatment, coerced voluntary treatment, forced and coerced drugging, physical and chemical restraint, and this only begins a long list of what we experience as torture because these procedures humiliate, debilitate, injure, incapacitate and kill people. You cannot pass laws that are unconstitutional and violate our rights.

Do your duty as our representatives to uphold our civil rights, our human rights and yes, our cognitive liberty. Your job in fact is to not put into statute what would further endanger those Basic Human Rights we must passionately uphold not just for Oregonians but because we are Oregonians it is what we do!!

This statute will not fix the broken behavioral health delivery system. It will not address the social determinants of health. It's very language, "intercept" – How can you intercept any human being, lock them in a hospital against their will, impose on them significant human rights violations and expect them to recover- it is impossible it , in fact only multiplies suffering and trauma . Until you have heard from the people who have been "intercepted" – You have not heard from your constituents. How can you, in good conscience, move these bills, SB762 and SB763, forward unless you believe that we are in fact not human beings and citizens of Oregon, but wild beasts who need to be caged?

Signed,

Rebecca Edens

Rebecca Edens, BA
Psychiatric Survivor