

Submitter: Cody Blackwell

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3835

Chair Bowman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3835A and its proposed -5 amendment. As a professional, I am deeply troubled by the direction this bill takes—especially in how it would impact Oregon’s most vulnerable children. This legislation reduces critical safeguards for children in the care of the state—particularly children with disabilities, who are already overrepresented in the child welfare system. HB 3835A narrows the definition of abuse and weakens oversight of practices like restraint and seclusion, which are often misused and deeply traumatizing. The idea that physical or emotional harm could go uninvestigated simply because it doesn’t meet a narrowed threshold, or that out-of-state placements could be made with less oversight, should concern every Oregonian. These children deserve trauma-informed, community-based care—not isolation, restraint, and reduced legal protection. We have a shared responsibility to uphold the dignity and safety of every child in state care. HB 3835A moves us in the wrong direction—one that could lead to more harm, more silence, and fewer checks on institutional power. I urge you to vote no on HB 3835A and reject any amendments that diminish protections for children in care. Oregon must do better. Sincerely, Cody Blackwell, Portland, Oregon.