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May 12, 2025

Dear Committee,

I am writing to encourage your support for HB 3835A. This important bill will help programs like ours at The Next Door, Inc. to continue to provide the care Oregon youth critically need, as well as help open access to care for children in our foster system.

Since 1971, The Next Door has been providing foster care services for local and statewide children and youth, among the many other services we provide to our community. This means that we have been fighting for these children for 54 years!

Oregon's system of care for our youth is broken, but we have the opportunity to begin the process of building a strong, robust, and lasting system that ensures our children have the care they need and deserve when they need it. No one wants to continue down this path we are on which has left **Oregon ranked last in the nation in youth care accessibility.** More importantly, no one wants to continue to let our children down. As providers, please help us be part of the solution moving forward.

Over the last three years, the System of Care Advisory Council (SOCAC) has invested countless hours engaging with all stakeholders, including parents, self-advocates, youth, providers, agency representatives, psychologists, pediatricians, tribal representatives, advocacy groups like Disability Rights Oregon, and the public. Through that process, numerous issues have been identified and discussed extensively about how to ensure children in state care can access needed services and are safe from abuse. **The product of this comprehensive work is HB 3835.**

In 2019, the legislature enacted SB 1, which built SOCAC to do this important work. Please support the work they asked of the council and the hard work of its members by supporting HB 3835A and supporting access with accountability for Oregon's youth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. Hamada, MSW
Executive Director