



## **Support HB 4083 to Cut Red Tape for Behavioral Health Workers**

Too many Oregonians cannot get mental health and substance use disorder care when they need it. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission surveyed 14 behavioral health profession types and found that 9 have alarmingly high turnover risk - more than two-thirds of workers intend to quit. When professionals leave, Oregonians in crisis go without care.

We are supporting House Bill 4083 because it would do the following:

### **Streamline Credentialing for Behavioral Health Workers**

Currently, workers are required to be validated through the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to bill Medicaid. They are then credentialed and reported on separately through different entities, including each payer that their provider bills for their services. This causes unnecessary delays that keep qualified professionals from serving patients and requires providers to pay workers who are not yet able to provide care.

House Bill 4083 will require OHA to adopt a centralized credentialing process for behavioral health workers, allowing qualified workers to begin providing care sooner and reducing administrative burden on providers.

### **Reduce Administrative Burden**

Behavioral health workers report that increasing administrative requirements – including duplicative reporting – take time away from patient care and contribute to workers leaving the profession.

House Bill 4083 directs OHA to minimize unnecessary administrative burden as part of their mission and report to the Legislature and Governor every two years on steps they have taken to reduce those burdens on providers.

### **Expand Access to Clinical Supervision**

Prospective master's level licensees need supervised hours to attain their license, but a lack of qualified clinical supervisors has created a bottleneck. Current rules for some behavioral health licensees allow for supervision by "any qualified mental health professional," while others are more restrictive.

House Bill 4083 will allow for master's-level clinicians under Board of Licensed Social Workers and the Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists to be supervised by any qualified supervisor (as determined by the boards) regardless of license type. This will expand

access to clinical supervision and allow qualified clinicians to enter the workforce faster so they can start treating patients and advance in their career.

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House Bill 4083 represents the first set of recommended actions from the Behavioral Health Talent Council, chaired by First Lady Aimee Kotek Wilson. The Council's recommendations have been carefully vetted, informed by rigorous research, shaped by frontline voices and experts in the field.

Please **vote yes on HB 4083** to cut red tape for behavioral health workers. This bill addresses what behavioral health workers need now: streamlined credentialing, reduced administrative burden, and expanded access to supervision. We urge your support.



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