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Dear Representative Gelser,

Thank you for listening to my input on HB 2192. As a clinical psychologist and school consultant, I've been involved with threat assessment for over 7 years and in that time have completed upwards of one hundred threat assessments. I've been involved with implementing and helping create threat assessment practices for several districts. I hope the information below will be helpful to the legislature in strengthening HB 2192.

An Overview of the Main Concepts in Threat Assessment:

- Threat Assessment is not a predictive science. It is intended to assess for *risk factors* and develop safety plans for students.
- Threat Assessment is not discipline. It is a parallel process for assessing the viability of threats and managing them.
- Threat Assessment is not just a mental health assessment. Threat assessments assess not only the student who makes the threat but the environment, situation, and target.

An Overview of Best-Practices

- Oregon is a national leader in best-practice threat assessment. Salem-Kaiser has developed a nationally recognized model for assessing threats.
- The Salem-Kaiser model has been adopted by many school districts in Oregon (and across the country). This model is very effective and comprehensive in comparison to previous practices.
- The Salem Model works like this
 - The district has a process for screening threats. Staff are trained in how to use the process.
 - A potential threat generates an inquiry by the administrator to determine if a full threat assessment is warranted given the circumstances.
 - A threat is then assessed by a building based team consisting in most districts of (a) an administrator, (b) the school resource officer and (c) a mental health person (usually school psychologist, counselor or licensed professional.)

- The team can, if needed consult with a licensed mental health person, such as a psychologist with knowledge of threat assessment.
- If the threat is determined to need further staffing, it is referred to the Level 2 team. This is a multi-agency team composed of community partners including DHS, Juvenile Justice, Police, County mental health etc.. This is a consultative team that brings an enormous amount of resources to the case.

Here are My Concerns and Proposed Changes to HB 2912 Concerning Threat Assessment

Concerns about requiring evaluations by outside licensed mental health providers:

- Outside mental health professionals have different reporting standards for HIPPA. They usually only report imminent threats.
- If a parent refuses consent for a mental health evaluation it cannot be done. The district needs the capacity to screen threats and incidents irrespective of consent.
- Outside mental health professionals rarely have any training in threat assessment. They tend to assess the person, but not other risk factors related to the case.
- Outside mental health professionals have no idea about the school environment, and little information about the student.

Suggestions for HB 2192

- Require districts to have a clear process and a site-based team for assessing and managing threat incidents.
- Require districts to construct safety plans as needed to manage potentially dangerous students.
- Require districts to use best practices: Craft the OARs for this bill to create more details around utilization of best practice threat assessment and safety planning.
- PG7, Line 41 of the bill lists a number of “best practices.” These are mental health and disciplinary interventions, not best practice threat assessment and safety management.