



## **VOTE YES on House Bill 4124**

The Oregon Psychological Association (OPA) fully supports HB 4124's establishment of a Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Coordinator. Youth suicide is often an impulsive act, and data on non-completed attempts reveal that the overwhelming majority of youths are grateful that they did not die. Effective programs do exist for identifying at risk youth, intervening to give them coping skills to prevent a crisis and managing a crisis so that they live through it. Hiring a point person to disseminate and implement those evidence-based programs on a statewide basis has great potential to save lives. We are particularly pleased to note the inclusion of data-gathering mechanisms to examine school and county rates, as social factors in those environments can be triggers to suicidal behavior and effective targets for intervention in prevention programs. The inclusion of wrap-around services for prevention, intervention and support in the aftermath of a suicide also earned our notice and support.

This bill is timely, as federal agencies are calling for improvements to Oregon's mental health system, including management of at risk youth (United States Department of Justice Interim Report to the State of Oregon, January 2, 2014).

We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to Representatives Gelser, Springer and Hoyle as well as Senator Courtney and Senator Steiner Hayward for putting forth this bill and we hope that you will join us in our whole-hearted support of this worthy bill.

For more information, please contact Lara Smith 503.804.9750

OPA ■ 147 SE 102<sup>nd</sup> Avenue ■ Portland, OR 97216  
503.253.9155 ■ [info@opa.org](mailto:info@opa.org) ■ [www.opa.org](http://www.opa.org)