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Hi members of the committee. My name is Riley Magers, I am 20 years old and I work as a Veterinary Technician in NE Portland.

I'm here today to talk about my experiences as a teenager when I was struggling through the Mental Health Care System. You have already heard from my Mom, and what it was like for her to navigate my care. I thought it was equally important to share with you my experience as the "Patient"...

I displayed many signs of emotional dysregulation and anxiety from a very young age, all of which gave me the title of a "difficult child". It wasn't until I was 12 that those signs started to look like a much bigger issue. My parents discovered I had been self mutilating after a regular check up exam with my pediatrician. They did the only thing they knew how to do, which was to find me a counselor. I was determined enough to keep my secrets and my suffering to myself, that I proved, again, to be too "difficult" for this particular person. I was a freshman in high school when I found a therapist whose determination was just as strong as mine. And while she was a key part in my recovery, at the time, one therapist was not enough to fix my

declining stability. In January of my junior year I made my first suicide attempt. My hospital stay and acute treatment was short and easy to manipulate. My only requirements to qualify for discharge were to fill out a single, double spaced page of questions regarding how I was feeling nearing my discharge, and to appear “stable enough” to go home. The latter being very flexible. I was sent home with 2 medications. One of them, they told me, was an SSRI, and the other helped me sleep. I had no information on those medications and was not equipped with the skills to be able to ask what exactly they were, and what exactly they were treating. I was told by the psychiatrist on site that it may have been my best shot for a smooth recovery. 3 weeks later I made my second attempt. It was during that second hospitalization that I was given an unofficial diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder. My mother was told then, that I was likely to be repeatedly hospitalized until I was 18 and could be officially diagnosed.

I could detail the rest of my story with faults in my treatment plans, and how the medical system failed me, but I don't want to leave you with fault. I want to leave you with ambition to do more. I was not special. I was no different than the kids I was hospitalized with. But my carefully chosen outpatient team, and the coordination of care they provided, was very different, and very special. I had known from age 14 that I did not have to

disclose anything that was said in my care providers office. However, it was signing those releases, and the active participation of my therapists and family members that allowed the seamless coordination of care that lead me down the path of recovery. I understood this because of the way they presented it to me. It was never to take away my right to privacy, it was to keep me safe. 2 girls I was in treatment with went back to their communities without the same safety precautions, and within a year, one took her own life, and the other was killed by her boyfriend. They were 16. I believe that if they were protected in the way that these bills are described, they may still be alive today.

Thank you for your time.

