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Chief Executive Officer

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

Wednesday, March 25th, 2014

Co-Chairs Bates and Nathanson, members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today on the Addictions and Mental Health budget. My name is Maree Wacker and I am the CEO of De Paul Treatment Centers. We serve 2,400 clients annually for co-occurring and substance abuse and mental health treatment. 75% of our clients are members of the Oregon Health Plan.

My goal here today is to ask for your help in elevating and addressing the significant problem our state faces with addictions, addictions treatment, and recovery services. For too long, our state has relegated addictions to the “back of the line.” The costs for our neglect increase in nearly every other area in the state budget including the criminal justice system, the education system, the child welfare system, and indeed most acutely, in our broader health care system.

We need your help to make addictions funding a top priority for our state. As Senator Bates mentioned last week, we need to turn our funding scheme upside down – invest less in institutional care, and far more in addictions and mental health. The current investment in addictions through CCOs doesn’t even get close to matching our expenses. In that vein, I want to express strong support for Senator Courtney’s mental health package. In that package, he has prioritized a large amount of funding - \$20m – towards addictions treatment, recovery, and prevention. This would be a HUGE step in bringing addictions forward from the back of the line.

In addition, we need your help to encourage our CCOs to allocate a greater portion of the capitated rate (the global budget) towards addictions. At the risk of offending my physical health care friends, the intent of CCOs was to shift the dollars from physical health care to behavioral health. This is simply NOT happening quickly enough and the funding has been at very low levels. With inadequate resources from CCOs, together with the cost study AMH conducted last year that revealed our rates are half of what it takes to cover our costs, we hope this would encourage you to realign the budget to prioritize addictions in the AMH/OHA budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments and I would be happy to answer any questions.