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AlbertinaKerr.org

April 3, 2015

Senator Michael Dembrow
900 Court St. NE, S-407
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 831 & SB 832

Dear Senator Dembrow:

Albertina Kerr Centers is a 108 year-old private non-profit organization that provides an array of mental health and developmental behavioral pediatric services to Oregon's children and families in need. We are home-based in the Portland area and provide mental health services to children and families from all over the state.

I am writing to express grave concern with SB 831 & SB 832 and their negative impact, if enacted in their current form, on thousands of vulnerable children and families. My two primary concerns include: 1) a significant reduction in access to services which are already in short supply and 2) an increase in costs to the state and to consumers.

Oregon depends upon a workforce of master's level behavioral health clinicians qualified under strict rules for competency. Requiring licenses instead will put at risk the care of thousands of OHP members and risk the employment of hundreds of experienced clinicians. Many of the best integrated care models require a workforce that is a mix of licensed professionals and unlicensed providers performing a variety of crucial roles and this legislation does not appear to support emerging best practices.

A likely result of passage of these bills is more costly care and reduction in access particularly for individuals with high acuity or chronic concerns.

I strongly encourage you to not move these bills forward in their current form.

Warm Regards,

Christopher J. Krenk, MSW
Chief Executive Officer



Accredited by The Joint Commission