

Date April 26 2015

TO: The Honorable Mitch Greenlick Chair
House Committee on Health Care

From: Mark Fisher
Oregon Consumer Advisory Council (OCAC) member

SUBJECT: SB 229

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee. I am Mark Fisher a member of the Oregon Consumer Advisory Council (OCAC); which is an official advisory body to Addictions and Mental Health (AMH) of the state of Oregon. My written testimony is in support of SB 229 which would permit council members to be reimbursed for their time in the OCAC meeting and the incurred travel expenses while serving the state of Oregon in these capacities.

The Council is composed consumers, survivors, ex-patients and family member using their lived experience of recovery from their own mental health issues, to better serve and represent those who are still suffering with mental health problems throughout Oregon. The meeting is held bimonthly and the council makes every attempt to recruit council members from every rural area of Oregon.

I travel from either from Grants Pass or Medford to Salem. My expenses are about \$300.00 per meeting. Often I need one night's lodging because it is about an eight to nine hour roundtrip drive plus the three hour meeting time and driving safety is important to me. I must travel through the mountains of southern Oregon during late fall & winter. So weather is always an important factor to consider. The major travel route is I-5.

The OCAC meeting is always held on a regularly scheduled workday for me. Although my employer allows me to attend the OCAC bimonthly meeting, I am not paid by my employer for that day. I must work on one of my off days to get my work responsibilities completed. I do not receive any vacation, sick or personal paid leave from my employer.

In between the OCAC meetings, there is work to be done for the OCAC, including at least two, one hour subcommittee phone calls, writing, and regular email correspondence. I do this work on my own time. If I am at work during those times, I track my time spent on OCAC tasks, and do not get paid by my employer. I make this time up on an off day to fulfill my job duties. I know other Council members who have jobs during regular business hours who have similar challenges including traveling significant distance.

I am dedicated to representing and serving southern Oregon Oregonians during the OCAC meetings. I listen to many residents and Peer providers who have sometimes desperate concerns. I am eager to represent them during OCAC meetings and bring these issues to the attention of AMH executive management through the proper communication channels. Thankfully this information reaches the ears and hearts and minds of those who can make changes for the best benefit of the greater Oregonian community of those who still suffer with mental illness.

Thank you for this chance to write testimony in support of SB 229