



Testimony in support of HB 4075 – School safety tip line

February 4, 2016

Dear Chair Barker and Members of House Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP) I would like to express our support for HB 4075 for its intent to make schools safer and to avoid violence and tragic consequences. The tip line will not only serve to initiate law enforcement response, it will be a referral to mental health and substance use disorder services in the community. This necessitates a well-coordinated and funded strategy for evaluating and supporting youth and family that involves mental health, school, law enforcement and juvenile justice system partners, immediately following calls to the tip line.

In order to effectively address calls to the tip line, local infrastructure, policies and protocols should be developed. If these mechanisms are in place before the tip line goes live, the appropriate placement in mental health and substance use disorder services will be assured and involvement in the justice system may be avoided. Specifically, we recommend that OSP coordinate with existing crisis and warm lines, and that OSP collaborate with key behavioral health stakeholders at the state and local level, including community mental health programs, which are responsible for the county-based crisis systems, as it develops the tip line.

We further suggest that the Oregon Health Authority determine whether or not there is an increased workload for the community behavioral health providers after the tip line goes into effect, and if there is an increased workload, to adequately fund follow up services from the tip line referrals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 4075 as a first step in establishing a statewide protocol for school threat assessment.

Sincerely,

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