

TESTIMONY in Support of SB 318

Submitted to the Senate Committee on Education

Submitted by: Carli Rohner, Advocacy & Prevention Coordinator

February 14, 2017

Chair Roblan, Vice chair Linthicum, and members of the committee, thank you for your time today. My name is Carli Rohner, and I coordinate prevention and advocacy services for Willamette University. My role in serving our students both in direct preventative efforts and as a confidential support resource.

The primary goal of violence prevention in Oregon's public education system and numerous college and university settings is to enable the young people of our state to live to their fullest potential, free of the emotional, physical and financial effects of sexual and relationship violence. As a prevention educator and advocate, I feel especially privileged to serve students in a state that actively works with our K-12 youth to assist them in establishing healthy relationships and the building blocks of non-violence.

In Oregon, we are uniquely situated to provide the foundation of healthy relationships and prevention programming to a substantial portion of our youth via our K-12 and community college programs.

But as our students become aware and able to address instances of sexual and relationship violence, we must also have a robust system that provides trauma-informed care to those students whose lives do intersect with violence during the course of their education.

We cannot escape the mutuality of prevention and response efforts: how we treat survivors directly impacts student's perceptions of our prevention messages, and vice versa. To ensure that these systems of prevention and response function at their utmost capacity, we must support the educators that assist our youth to be trauma-informed and have access to current best practices and resources in their field. In my experience, technical assistance is an invaluable tool that allows people in my position throughout our state to fully do our work and be truly effective.

We know that as we build communities that do not tolerate violence, and actively and competently support those who have been affected by it, our students go on to face better health outcomes, contributing to their fullest capacity and relieving financial and resource burdens of our government and university systems.

Metaphorically, prevention and response are two sides of the same coin. Each must equally be strong in order to best serve our students and their needs. This is why SB 318 is so critically important to the continuation of our prevention and response efforts in Oregon. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak in front of you today, I welcome any questions you may have at this time.