



ST. MARY'S HOME FOR BOYS

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April 5, 2017

Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services

RE: SB 5526

Dear Co-chairs Senator Steiner-Hayward, Representative Rayfield and members of the Committee:

I had an opportunity to watch two of the Committee's recent public hearings related to the Child Welfare system and saw firsthand that the Committee has been well briefed on the systemic crisis before us. I appreciate this opportunity to share with you the complexity of treatment needs of the children and young adults we serve as well as our collaboration with the Department of Human Services in addressing our current capacity crisis.

In the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study by Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control, researchers identified strong, graded relationships between 4 or more exposures to childhood traumatic stressors and numerous negative health behaviors, health care utilization and overall health outcomes later in life. A recent sample of our clients found 85% had an ACE's score of 4 or more. The mean St. Mary's Home for Boys ACE's score was 6.1 and the mode was 8. Our boys average 8 prior placements and are often aggressive and emotionally dysregulated.

In December of 2015 the Oregon Alliance of Children's Programs in conjunction with DHS, OYA and OHA concluded a 16-month comprehensive review of the Behavioral Rehabilitation System. This unprecedented multi-agency collaboration resulted in crucial systemic recommendations related to developing and resourcing a trauma informed, developmentally appropriate, culturally sensitive and gender-responsive service array.

Director Saiki and Deputy Director Richardson have demonstrated unprecedented provider engagement and collaboration. They have done more in the last year to authentically address systemic challenges than I have experienced in the previous decade combined and that is neither hyperbole nor platitude. The Department of Human Services leadership and resourcing priorities are wholly synergistic with treatment providers in addressing material aspects of the Child Welfare system crisis before us. Please support SB 5526.

Sincerely,

Francis Maher

Executive Director

St. Mary's Home for Boys

