



Testimony in support of HB 5015
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Submitted by Kerry Naughton, Executive Director
April 6, 2017

Co-Chair Winters, Co-Chair Stark, and members of the Committee:

My name is Kerry Naughton and I am the Executive Director of Oregon Abuse Advocates & Survivors in Service (OAASIS). OAASIS is building a movement that empowers communities to prevent child sexual abuse and help survivors live full, healthy, joyful lives. Our base is comprised of thousands of Oregonians—people who were sexually abused as children, survivors’ family members and loved ones, and community members who care about the safety, health, and well-being of survivors of child sexual abuse. We are working towards a future where all people experience a loving childhood free of abuse and trauma; all relationships are based on equity and respect; and all people who have been sexually abused are supported to heal.

We are pleased to support the lifesaving work of the Crime Victims Services Division of the Department of Justice, particularly the Oregon Domestic and Sexual Violence Services Fund (ODSVS) and Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Intervention Fund (CAMI). ODSVS and CAMI-funded programs are vital resources to achieve safe, healthy communities across Oregon and support survivors’ healing journeys.

At OAASIS, we know that people can heal from the trauma of child sexual abuse. This knowledge is based on scientific evidence related to trauma and resiliency, as well as the lived experiences of many survivors involved in our work. A survivor’s healing process often develops over the course of a lifetime and is often facilitated by professional support. For many people who were sexually abused as children, this support is found through Oregon’s domestic and sexual violence services programs and child abuse intervention centers.

For Oregonians who were sexually abused as children, the need for these holistic, trauma-informed services is great. National research indicates that 1 in 4 females and 1 in 6 males are sexually abused before age 18. Based on the most recent census, an estimated 813,899 Oregonians have been (or will be) sexually abused before age 18. If every survivor stood hand-in-hand (4 feet across), the line of survivors would extend approximately 154 miles—extending from Portland, through Salem and Eugene, and reaching almost all the way to Roseburg.

Most children who are sexually abused are harmed by someone they know and trust. The abuser could be a family member, friend, or trusted person in a position of power, like a teacher or coach. Some

children are able to disclose the abuse; these courageous survivors can access comprehensive support through Oregon's child abuse intervention centers. Child abuse intervention centers are designed to minimize trauma of children who have been abused by providing wrap-around resources and interventions in a child-focused environment. **OAASIS advocates that CAMI, a vital funding stream for Oregon's child abuse intervention centers, is adequately funded to support the healing needs of children who have been abused.**

For many survivors of child sexual abuse, life is not safe enough and the abuse is not understood enough to disclose the abuse until the survivor is older. For these courageous survivors, Oregon's domestic and sexual violence services programs become a lifeline of safety and support. These community-based services help survivors find safety, stay safe, and rebuild their lives. ODSVS provides vital funding to Oregon's domestic and sexual violence services programs, but is currently funded at less than half the amount needed to meet even the most basic, minimal need. **OAASIS advocates that ODSVS is funded at \$16 million in 2017-2019.**

We understand that Oregon is in a challenging budgetary situation and we do not envy the difficult decisions you have to make. We ask that you continue to support vulnerable Oregonians who have been abused so these courageous survivors can reclaim their resilience and strength. Oregon's strong network of community-based nonprofit victim services is not yet funded at the level where everyone who has experienced crime and violence is able to access support. CAMI and ODSVS are important to support survivors' healing journeys and to prevent further violence in communities across Oregon.

We hope you'll join us in supporting adequate funding for CAMI and \$16 million for ODSVS in HB 5015. Thank you for your time and consideration.