

Dear House Education Committee,

I am communicating with you with regard to HB 3395. This bill would allow school districts to employ individuals licensed as school social workers to provide to students in kindergarten through grade eight services that school counselors provide.

My name is Kayce Lilley, and I'm a school counselor in Dallas, Oregon. I also am a member of the Oregon School Counselor Association and the American School Counselor Association. School counselors are vital in elementary schools and replacing counselors would be a disservice to students.

I request that you vote NO on this bill unless you are thoroughly convinced that school social workers have the educational preparation to provide the comprehensive counseling and guidance services stipulated in OARs 541-022-1510, 541-022-0405, or 541-022-1130. If you vote yes and school social workers are not adequately prepared to meet the requirements of these OARs, it would not only be unethical for them to be placed in these roles but also certainly not in the best interests of students, nor the school buildings and districts in which they are placed, nor even in the best interests of the school social worker.

What I suggest is that you vote no on this HB 3395 and then recommend that a special committee or commission be convened to review the preparation standards for school social workers to determine if they are being adequately prepared to fulfill these OARs or at the very least that you seek input from the ODE Specialists legally responsible for seeing that these legal mandates be fulfilled.

Thanks for your consideration,

Kayce Lilley
School Counselor