

April 10, 2017

Dear House Education Committee,

I am communicating with you in regards 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. I am asking that you vote **No** on this bill. I am a Licensed School Counselor in Oregon and have worked in the profession for twelve years. Currently, I am a Counselor on Special Assignment, helping coordinate the comprehensive counseling program for the Beaverton School District.

School counselors are licensed educators trained to meet the academic, career, and social/emotional needs of our students through designing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive counseling program that promotes student success. School counselors are trained in organizational assessments and tools to effectively manage, deliver, and evaluate such a program that includes classroom guidance, prevention, intervention, and outreach. This comprehensive program is data informed and focuses on student outcomes which positively impacts student growth and success.

As a school counselor, I have successfully collaborated with school social workers but do not see the two roles as interchangeable. School social workers are more responsive by design while school counselors influence systems and large student groups. Moreover, as education evolves and the demands on our classroom teachers increase, we need professional school counselors who have the training on how to integrate themselves to the total educational program rather than working in isolation.

I request that you vote **NO** on HB 3395 for the reason that school social workers do not have the education and training to design an effective school counseling program that is comprehensive in nature, outcomes based, and addresses the complex academic and career needs of our students. All of which school counselors are qualified to do, have been doing, and will continue to do, across the state, for all students to succeed.

Sincerely,

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