



May 9, 2017

Representative Jeff Barker, Chair  
House Committee on Judiciary  
Oregon Legislative Assembly  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 795A – May 10, 2017 Hearing

Dear Representative Barker and Members of the Committee:

We are writing in support of SB 795 as amended. We recognize the challenges that victims face when in crisis, and we believe that SB 795 strengthens Oregon's response by giving sexual assault victims the privilege of choosing a personal representative to support them during the medical-forensic exam, while also ensuring that medical professionals or law enforcement notify the victim of this right.

Victim Advocates have a very important role in providing crisis intervention as well as advocacy services to victims and their families. Often victims in a state of crisis may not fully understand the opportunities for support and assistance available to them, and SB795 offers the chance to discuss these options, in person, with a Victim Advocate so that they are in a better position to make informed decisions. This process is necessary for increasing access to critical services for victims.

Having advocacy support available in-person also allows the medical providers and Law Enforcement officers to focus on providing treatment to the victim and on the investigation, without impeding emergency care or evidence collection. We are pleased to see that the bill directs providers to comply with not only their local Sexual Assault Response Team protocols, but also the Child Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Response Team protocols to ensure that SB795 does not impede with child abuse assessment protocols.

We urge you to pass this important legislation in support of sexual assault victims and their families in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Patty Terzian  
Executive Director  
Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers