



**Testimony in support of SB 795A
House Committee on Judiciary
Submitted by Kerry Naughton, Executive Director
May 10, 2017**

Chair Barker, Vice-Chair Williamson and Olson, 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 harmed are supported on their healing journeys.

We are pleased to support SB 795A. This important legislation will ensure that sexual assault survivors who have medical forensic exams are informed of available resources and can access services to help survivors heal.

At OAASIS, we know that people can heal from the trauma of sexual violence. 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 thousands of Oregon survivors each year, this support is found through community-based victim advocacy programs.

SB 795A provides sexual assault survivors vital information and the ability to connect with advocacy services that foster healing from the trauma of sexual violence. SB 795A ensures a survivor of sexual assault is able to discuss their option to have advocacy services, in person, so the survivor can make an informed decision about their care. Allowing for an advocate to be present during an exam provides immediate support and presents the opportunity for survivors to be informed of additional resources that are available to them to assist in their recovery, including: the Address Confidentiality Program, Counseling resources, safety planning, Crime Victims' Compensation, and follow-up services to provide ongoing support.

We hope you’ll join us in supporting SB 795A. Thank you for your time and consideration.