



OREGON ALLIANCE OF CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

To the Senate Human Services Committee - Chair, Senator Gelser and Committee Members
For Consideration in the February 1, 2016 Hearing

Alliance Positions:

- SB 243 - Neutral
- SB 244 - Support with Amendments
- SB 245 - Support
- SB 246 – Support with Amendments
- SB 636 – Support with Amendments

SLOW DOWN THE PROCESS

- These are very important subjects - 24 minutes isn't adequate time for making law [this is the amount of time available for these 5 bills in the only hearing scheduled].
- We have ideas for making these bills better and we'd like a reasonable process for talking about them.
- Emergency passage is not necessary for these bills. Current data from DHS shows some important improvements have been made.

DUE PROCESS ISN'T PRESENT

- Conditions placed *based on allegations* have created penalties far greater than the penalty for a founded abuse or neglect.
- One mistake by a staff person can cause children to be removed from treatment, staff to be sent home without pay for months, and a program to close.
- This doesn't happen in any other arena that is responsible for keeping people safe:
 - A drunk airplane pilot doesn't result in closing the terminal and denying passengers the ability to travel.
 - A med error by a nurse doesn't shut down the clinic.
 - A surgeons error doesn't send patients in treatment home and close the hospital.
 - School bus driver in an accident doesn't result in the transportation for school children to stop.
- A staff error can also create a mandatory license revocation, shutting down organizations -- even if the organization did everything right.

CHECK THE CHILD or CHECK THE BOX?

- Legislation like these bills demand that providers prioritize meeting every element of every rule, contract condition, licensing condition and statutory condition – every day.
 - The only thing they don't demand is that they meet the clinical standard of care for treatment and healing.
 - In some cases, these statutes and rules have caused direct harm to children.

QUALITY CAPACITY IS CRITICAL FOR SAFETY

- Access for traumatized children is being reduced
 - Some programs evaluate whether they want to take children with high risk behaviors like suicide attempts, false allegations, and running away.
- 11 Behavioral Rehabilitation Service (BRS) contracts have been turned back since changes like SB 1515 started.
 - NONE OF THEM HAD ANY LICENSING OR INVESTIGATION ISSUES.
 - Community leaders who serve on nonprofit boards said they would not continue under the current environment of risk from statutes, rules and regulatory oversight with grave penalties.
 - Rates for BRS are universally recognized as 30% under cost.
- All culturally specific programs for children of color are gone.
- There is only 1 gender-specific program for girls left in the entire state.

**PLEASE SLOW DOWN THIS PROCESS TO HAVE THESE IMPORTANT CONVERSATIONS.
CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS ARE SOMETHING EVERYONE NEEDS TO SOLVE.**

For More Information Contact:

Janet Arenz, Executive Director 503-399-9076 janet@oregonalliance.org

Doug Riggs, President – NGRC 503-702-5120 doug@ngrc.com