



January 31, 2017

Senate Human Services Committee
Attn: Chair, Senator Gelser and Committee Members for Consideration in February 1, 2017 Hearing.
Oregon State Senate
900 Court Street NE,
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Gelser, members of the committee:

My name is Felipe Rendon and I am a newly elected board member of Christian Community Placement Center (CCPC), a great and local non-for profit that serves the needs of one of Oregon's most disenfranchised group: Children in foster care. When offered the opportunity to join the board, I was ecstatic at the chance to work with such an amazing organization whose mission reflected my core values, and whose everyday work focused on the issues near and dear to my heart. I'm proud to report to you that we here at CCPC are committed to working with you, and all other community members, and organizations, that seek to better the lives of children and youth in Oregon. I am continuously amazed by the dedication that our staff and blown away by the transformations I have seen some our clients have. I strongly believe that the work that our organization does is vital and in harmony with the goals the committee seeks to achieve.

Recently however, many challenges have emerged regarding the OAAPI investigation process. These challenges have left us at CCPC, and many other fellow organizations in the community, worried about the future and efficiency of the programs we currently run with the assistance of state and local agencies. The new restrictions which require one-hundred percent compliance allow little to no room for deviation to our organization and fellow providers. In the short times since we have been faced with these new challenges we have come to learn that anything short of absolute compliance is sufficient cause for revocation of our licenses. We have further come to know, that most non-compliance issues, regardless of magnitude or intent are often categorized under the disposition of abuse and neglect. Due to these new challenges, and the apparent broad interpretation of the new guidelines, CCPC and many other community organizations fear that we will be the next ones targeted under the new guidelines. The feeling behind this is not an arbitrary one, the new rules dictate that non-compliance in any form, even if it is a product of what used to be human error, is now an offense that could carry a disposition of neglect or abuse, and even criminal sanctions on the employee, or agent themselves.

Therefore, I write this letter to the esteemed committee to provide you testimony on the pragmatic and the detrimental effects that these new rules have on our organization, and our peer providers, in our day-to-day operations. I am concerned that without enough time for us all to work together on these bills, we will have more unintended negative consequences. I look forward to having the opportunity to discuss these issues with each of you further, as we collectively, are working towards the same goal to provide a safe and better environment to the youth that are entrusted to us by the citizens of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Felipe Rendon
Board Member
Christian Community Placement Center.