

## Rosenberg Corey

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**From:** Roger C. Langlie <rlanglie@belloniranch.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2017 11:00 AM  
**To:** SHS Exhibits  
**Subject:** Letter of Testimony - Senate Committee on Human Services Hearing on February 1, 2017

January 26, 2017

Senator Sara Gelser, Chair  
Senator Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair  
Senator Michael Dembrow  
Senator Tim Knopp  
Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson

Dear Senate Committee on Human Services;

I am writing the committee to ask for a reasonable process for important conversations to ensure that child safety issues are appropriately addressed through SB243, SB244, SB245, SB246, and SB636 and the system that provides these critical services to children remain. I am supportive of the bills, if they are amended to include provisions to ensure due process to providers.

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 staff error can also create a mandatory license revocation, shutting down organizations, even if the organization did everything right.

Legislation like these bills demand that providers prioritize meeting every element of every rule, contract condition, licensing condition and statutory condition. 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 the safety of children. 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. Eleven Behavioral Rehabilitation Service (BRS) contracts have been turned back since changes like SB 1515 started. None of these programs 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. All culturally specific programs for children of color are gone. Currently, there is only one gender-specific program for girls left in the entire state.

I'm concerned that without enough time for us all to work together on these bills, we will have more unintended negative consequences.

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