

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 48: REQUIRING SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING TO CERTAIN PROFESSIONALS

February 7, 2017

Dear Senator Geisler and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee,

As the Co-Founder and Clinical Director of ColumbiaCare Services, a nonprofit that serves hundreds of mentally ill Individuals throughout Oregon, and as the Director of its Center for Suicide Prevention, I would like to express support for SB 48 and for its life-saving potential.

Most graduate training programs do not address issues of suicide, and the science of suicide recognition and intervention has advanced since the development of the US and State of Oregon Suicide Prevention Plans. I have trained professionals in 23 States and nine countries and there is a common theme...suicide can be recognized, intervened with, and treated. Scores of people have told me their life-saving stories using their new skills.

SB requires limited training every six years without adding to the burden of more continuing education hours. Other states have successfully adopted this strategy and it is working. Please pass SB 48.

Best regards,

Gary McConahay PhD