



Testimony on HB 2218

This testimony is in opposition to HB 2218

The [Oregon Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers](#) (OATSA) is the state chapter of the [Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers](#) (ATSA), an international, multi-disciplinary nonprofit membership organization that promotes evidence based practices, public policy, and community strategies that lead to the effective assessment, treatment and management of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse. ATSA and OATSA promotes the philosophy that empirically based assessment, practice, management, and policy strategies will: enhance community safety, reduce sexual recidivism, protect victims and vulnerable populations, transform the lives of those caught in the web of sexual violence, and illuminate paths to prevent sexual abuse.

OATSA is focused specifically on the prevention of sexual abuse through the effective management and treatment of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse in Oregon. OATSA focuses on the following goals for our local communities:

- Elimination of sexual victimization;
- The protection of our communities through responsible and ethical treatment of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse;
- The prevention of sexual assault through effective management of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse;
- The maintenance of high standards of professionalism and integrity within its membership.

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed HB 2549 to establish a risk assessment based sexual offender notification and level system. A risk assessment based level system is in adherence with evidenced based practices as outlined within SB 267, as it incorporates the current advancements within the field of offender research. Additionally, research has demonstrated that conviction based systems are neither accurate nor effective for identifying a sexual offender's risk for reoffense as conviction based systems typically overestimate or underestimate an offender's risk due to the variability of sentencing practices; are far more likely to obscure important differences among registered offenders; and endorse a "one size fits all" approach for classification of sexual offenders (Ackerman et al., 2011; Tabachnick & Klein, 2011; Zgoba et al., 2012).

HB 2218 is not in adherence with evidence based practices and undermines the goals of HB 2549 by creating a special category of convictions which would result in public notification, no matter what level of risk the offender may present.

Submitted on behalf of the OATSA Board by Katherine Gotch – OATSA Policy Representative

Contact: Katherine Gotch, MA, LPC (503) 206-5239, iccsnw@gmail.com