



February 20, 2018

TO: Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, Chair
House Committee on Human Services and Housing
FR: Bob Joondeph, Executive Director
RE: Support for SB 1540-A

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) wants to thank the Senate Committee on Human Services for supporting SB 1540-A. While all portions of the bill are important, DRO wishes to express its strong support for Section 3 of the bill.

In 1991, I served on a workgroup on behalf of DRO that drafted a bill that would become Oregon's Abuse Reporting for Adults with Mental Illness or Developmental Disabilities law. At that time, all community mental health services were provided by counties or their contractors.

In the intervening years, Oregon's process for funding community mental health services changed but its abuser reporting and investigation law did not. The result has been to leave highly vulnerable people without the benefit of abuse investigation and protective services, when necessary. It has also caused abuse investigations in the Oregon State Hospital to lose an important level of protection from conflict of interest.

SB 1540-A will remedy these problems by returning authority to county and state abuse investigation teams to take appropriate action to keep vulnerable individuals safe. DRO looks forward to continuing the conversation among stakeholders to make sure all of our abuse reporting and investigation laws are keeping pace with changes in the disability service sector.

For this reason, DRO supports SB 1540-A, and particularly Section 3.