



DISABILITY RIGHTS OREGON

January 31, 2019

TO: Senator Sara Gelser, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
FR: Bob Joondeph, Executive Director, Disability Rights Oregon  
RE: SB 167: DRO supports

Senator Gelser and Members of the Committee:

Disability Rights Oregon (DRO) is the Protection and Advocacy System for Oregon. It has provided legal-based advocacy services to Oregonians with disabilities since 1977.

DRO supports SB 167 to continue Oregon's recognition of the basic rights of individuals who use publically-funded community mental health services.

In 1991, the Oregon legislature passed a bill that created system of mandatory abuse reporting and investigation for people receiving community-based mental health services. Two years later, the legislature passed a bill affecting the same population, this time setting out the basic rights of people receiving services. Due to changes in the manner that these services receive public financing, many providers of services became uncovered for both abuse reporting and rights protection

In the 2018 session, SB 1540 corrected state law to assure that the protections of mandatory abuse reporting and investigation were restored for the benefit of people receiving community mental health services. The community bill of rights, however, was not updated in the same manner.

SB 167 uses the same definitional changes contained in SB 1540 (from 2018) to assure that Oregonians who receive publically-funded community behavioral health services enjoy the same rights as they have for the past 25 years.

The result will be that individuals shall continue to be entitled to an enumerated list of rights when receiving services in community-based facilities and county mental health programs and their contractees. Those rights will also apply to other publically-funded community mental health service providers.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 167.