

March 7, 2019

TO: Representative Andrea Salinas, Chair
House Committee on Health Care
FR: Bob Joondeph, Executive Director
RE: Support for HB 2831

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

During those years, DRO has supported efforts to transform Oregon's array of mental health services to promote recovery, prevention and community support, with the understanding that preventing avoidable institutionalization is both humane and cost-effective. HB 2831 will further Oregon's efforts to use evidence-based community services to avoid the need for more restrictive and expensive interventions.

Peer-run wellness and recovery services will also address the increasing census crisis in our jails and state hospital that is driven by people who experience mental health crisis that leads to nuisance criminality such as trespassing. Peer-run centers can offer a more effective resource for local law enforcement and judges who are presently strapped for community-based alternatives to the ineffective and costly cycle of arrest, incarceration and short-term psychiatric restoration at the state hospital.

For these reasons, DRO strongly supports HB 2831.