



March 13, 2019

Testimony in support of HB 3178

Dear Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice Chair Noble, and Members of the House Committee on Housing and Human Services,

My name is Pamela Heisler. I am the Executive Director of Prevent Child Abuse Oregon- a newly formed chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America. Our mission is to protect children and strengthen families. **I'm here today in support of an investment in Child Abuse Intervention Centers.**

We are familiar with the good work of Centers and believe investing in their success is a direct investment in our most vulnerable children. We support children and families receiving immediate, trauma informed intervention services when abuse has been identified. This, followed by the family advocacy and evidence-based therapy that some Center's provide, can put a child on a different path than the ones we too often see in this work. Though children may have been victims of abuse, when intervention is done in the right way, it can accelerate healing in build resiliency.

At Prevent Child Abuse Oregon, we know that the real key to healthier communities and families lies in front-end prevention. Centers know this too, and this is why so many of them are already deeply engaged in prevention in their communities. Nine centers provide community members with Stewards of Children training aimed at preventing child sexual abuse. I have taken this training and can say with confidence that it provides tangible ways for each of us to keep the kids we care about safe, and recognize the signs when they are not. On this particular issue, Centers are leading the way- 3 have already reached their goals to train over 5% of the adult population in their communities. Others are not far behind.

The funding under consideration today is not for prevention, but I anticipate that when Centers have more of their legislatively mandated medical services funded, which this bill will allow, they will be able to increase their impact in the field of primary prevention. I know we can prevent child abuse from occurring, and Centers are an important partner in this work.

Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pamela Heisler".

Pamela Heisler
Executive Director

Board of Directors

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Owner, OPAD Consulting

Mickey Lansing, **Vice-Chair**
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Mary Ratliff
Project Director, Protect Our Children

Ruth Taylor
Program Consultant

Executive Director

Pamela Heisler, MPA

Mission

To protect children and strengthen families.

Vision

Every child, regardless of race, class, culture, or geography, lives in a safe home in a supportive community.