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March 13, 2019

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Testimony in Support of HB 3178

Chair Keny Guyer, Vice Chairs Noble and Sanchez, and member of the committee,

On behalf of Clackamas Women's Services I am writing to urge your support of HB3178.

Clackamas Women's Services (CWS), a community-based non-profit agency that has supported survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, trafficking and elder abuse on their path to safety and stability for over 30 years. Our core mission is to break the isolation for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

I have served as the Executive Director for CWS for over a decade and have had the privilege of working in this field for over twenty years. I have seen firsthand the critical important of providing a full spectrum of support to children and youth impacted by violence. Healing from trauma is possible, but it requires an investment and commitment.

Child Abuse Intervention Centers (CAIC) play a crucial role on our system of care for individuals and families impacted by abuse, neglect and violence. They provide a trauma informed, safe and caring space for children and families to disclose abuse- the first critical step in the process of healing. They provide medical and forensic assessments, convene a multi-disciplinary approach to navigate the criminal justice and public safety systems, provide advocacy and crisis intervention and they work to link the victim and family to on-going supportive services. Many provide prevention programs directly in their communities as well.

Many of the CAICs have started to provide evidence based therapy modalities. I cannot express how important it is that we support these efforts. The path of healing rests on approaches like this and CAICs and are uniquely qualified to provide this support if adequately funded.

CAICs touch multiple parts of our system, including public safety, prosecution, social services and public health. They connect various elements of the response and care system for victims of abuse in a way that is trauma informed. They play a critical role in our ability to identify and intervene and perhaps most importantly to provide the support necessary to heal the wounds of trauma and build resiliency and wellness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Erlbaum', is written over the typed name.

Melissa Erlbaum, MPA
Executive Director
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