



## Testimony on SB 5525-Support for POP 402

March 13, 2019

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and Nosse and Members of Ways & Means Human Services Subcommittee:

I am submitting testimony today on behalf of the Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide in support of POP 402. Members of the Alliance to Prevent Suicide are appointed by the Oregon Health Authority and include subject matter experts from the public and private sectors, key leaders from state agencies, evaluators, legislators such as Sen. Sara Gelsler and Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, loss and attempt survivors, representatives of groups at higher risk for suicide, and young people.

In 2017 we lost 107 young people, age 24 and younger, to suicide in Oregon. An additional 750 youth were hospitalized for suicide attempts or serious risk of suicide. We have the 17<sup>th</sup> highest rate of youth suicide in the nation and suicide is the second highest cause of death for young people in our state.

Youth suicide is a difficult topic without a simple solution. Oregon is beginning to address it in a thoughtful and comprehensive manner. In 2014, HB4124 established the Suicide Intervention and Prevention Coordinator in the Oregon Health Authority and mandated development of a 5-year Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan (YSIPP). This plan, modeled on national best-practices and informed by local knowledge, has provided a blueprint for action in our state—yet it has never been adequately funded. POP 402 would begin to address this gap by allocating \$13.1 million to fund the Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan and expand school based mental health services. Approaches to suicide prevention, intervention and postvention differ for adults and youth. The POP also would also fund development of a parallel Adult Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan.

At its core, the YSIPP lays out a vision for a new normal in Oregon for youth and families in which schools, health systems and communities:

- Promote a sense of **hope** and nurture resilience.
- Make it safe to ask for **help** and ensure that the **right help** is available at the **right time**.
- Foster community **healing** after an attempt or suicide in order to prevent contagion.

We can, and *must*, do better as a state to support young people and their families. POP 402 provides essential investment to move towards this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annette A. Marcus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Annette Marcus, MSW

Statewide Liaison, Oregon Alliance to Prevent Suicide

Contact: [amarcus@aocmhp.org](mailto:amarcus@aocmhp.org)