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March 14, 2019

Sen. Sara Gelsler, Chair  
Sen. Dallas Heard, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
Oregon Legislative Assembly  
900 State Street  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support of SB 964

Dear Chair Sen. Gelsler, Vice Chair Sen. Heard, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the board and staff of Liberty House and the children we serve, I write to support SB 964. Liberty House has been honored to have been included in the concept development and planning relating to this bill and looks forward to participating with our very innovative and effective partners.

Liberty House is the child abuse assessment and intervention center (ORS 418.782), serving Marion and Polk Counties since 1999. We see an average 600 children annually in our clinic for specialized medical evaluation and assessment of all types of child maltreatment, including children referred under Karly's Law (ORS 419B.022-.024). We have added a trauma-informed therapy program and now have six full-time therapists who work with children as well as their caregivers and parents to help the children and their families heal from the shame, guilt, isolation, depression and other serious consequences of trauma. We are actively recruiting for more therapists who will help us expand our services to include treatment for adult survivors of childhood trauma. Our therapists offer a wide range of support groups and parent training that help to strengthen families. I am submitting an article I wrote further explaining the value of Liberty House along with this letter.

**Child abuse is the most critical and deadly public health emergency facing the State of Oregon. It is a driving cause of virtually ALL of the other things YOU are looking at as policy makers: student disruptive behavior in classrooms, youth suicide, juvenile crime, youth drug addiction, children raping other children, and a whole host of expensive physical, mental and behavioral health disorders that cost the state billions each year.**

**The concepts outlined in SB 964 provide part of the answer to helping reduce the amount of child maltreatment that we are seeing, and we at Liberty House are fully supportive.**

Thank you for your kind consideration,

*Alison S. Kelley*

Alison S. Kelley, JD; CEO