



March 19, 2019

RE: House Bill 2941

House Committee on Education:

For the record, I am Joaquín Borrego, Jr., Dean of the School of Graduate Psychology in the College of Health Professions at Pacific University. This letter is in support of House Bill 2941. This House Bill is introduced by Representative Teresa Alonso León.

The Pacific University School of Graduate Psychology offers three graduate-level psychology training programs: 1) MA in Applied Psychological Sciences, 2) PsyD in Clinical Psychology, and 3) PhD in Clinical Psychology. The APS program is nationally accredited by the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) and the PsyD program is accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA). The PhD, our newest training program, is 'accredited, on contingency' by APA.

Nationally, there is a paucity of master's and doctoral-level practitioners from diverse backgrounds and there is also a shortage of culturally competent master's and doctoral-level practitioners who are able to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of our increasingly diverse communities and society as a whole. This is certainly true for Oregon as its demographics continue to rapidly change and the State becomes increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. One demographic groups that continues to grow in Oregon is the Hispanic/Latinx community.

HB 2941 addresses this paucity by establishing critical requirements for the development and training of diverse mental health practitioners. It is forward-thinking in building a pipeline for creating skilled and qualified mental health practitioners that can meet the needs of Oregon's increasingly-diverse community.

Oregon's communities of color are at disproportionate risk for suicide and poorer mental and behavioral health because of the current lack of culturally-specific mental health providers. HB2491 is essential legislation for safeguarding the well-being and future prosperity of Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration of an issue so important to our Oregon communities.

Sincerely,

Joaquín Borrego, Jr., PhD
Dean, School of Graduate Psychology
College of Health Professions
Pacific University