



AOCMHP Testimony on HB 3095

Behavioral Health Provider Rate Parity Needed

March 25, 2019

Dear Chair Salinas and Members of House Health Care Committee:

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), we support HB 3095, which increases rates for behavioral health providers to help narrow the wage gap between them and their physical health provider counterparts.

At the core of the behavioral health system are dedicated and compassionate people. In order to strengthen the behavioral health system, we must value the workforce by increasing their numbers and training opportunities, and pay living wages by raising behavioral health provider rates. Findings from a 2017 behavioral health workforce study in the Portland metro region revealed that behavioral health provider rates were significantly below cost and clinicians' salaries and benefits were well below market rate.

Investments in the behavioral health system yield significant savings and improved outcomes in Education, Public Safety and Medical systems. While the legislature has many challenging decisions to make this session about prioritizing resources, we ask that you consider the significant need for behavioral health services across the state and the people who dedicate their lives to delivering these services.

Please support HB 3095.

Sincerely,

Cheryl L. Ramirez
Director, AOCMHP