



Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force

House Committee on Human Services and Housing
Testimony in Support of HB4112
February 3, 2020

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

HB4112 is a legislative priority for the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force.

The Sexual Assault Task Force is a private, non-profit, non-governmental statewide agency with over 100 multi-disciplinary members appointed by the Attorney General. Members serve as advisors on 1 of 8 subcommittees including: Advocacy Response, Campus, Criminal Justice, Legislative & Public Policy, Medical-Forensic, Men's Engagement, Offender Management, and Prevention & Education. Our membership informs the work of our programs which include providing Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) to advocates, campus practitioners, law enforcement, preventionists, prosecutors, SANE's and other multi-disciplinary responders.

Our mission is to advance a multi-disciplinary, survivor-centered approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence in Oregon. Our goal is to prevent sexual violence from happening in the first place, while simultaneously improving our response efforts to mitigate trauma and ensure the safety and security of all victims.

PREVENT: Health Education and Erin's Law

SATF has invested significant time and resources to highlight the value of health education and its connection to violence prevention. When youth have information about their bodies, healthy relationships, healthy boundaries, and how to access a trusted adult, the risk of perpetration reduces significantly. SATF has long been an advocate of increasing FTE at the Oregon Department of Education; we believe that this investment will increase capacity to implement Erin's Law and reduce rates of sexual violence and abuse. Erin's Law is one of three critical pieces of policy that Oregon's legislature has passed in recent years, including *Comprehensive Sex Education* and the *Healthy Teen Relationship Act*. All three policies inform and support one another and are required to effectively implement violence and abuse prevention efforts.

DETECT: Oregon Child Abuse Prevalence Study

We are missing clear data on the number of people who experience violence, abuse and neglect as children in Oregon. The *Oregon Child Abuse Prevalence Study*, otherwise known as OCAPS, is a scientifically sound and piloted measurement strategy from the University of Oregon's *Center for the Prevention of Abuse and Neglect*. OCAPS will more accurately determine rates of child abuse and neglect in Oregon by directly surveying a randomized sample of youth 16 and over in schools across the state.

OCAPS will allow us to capture vital information, producing a baseline from which we can have a better understanding of the breadth of experiences that youth are having in the various aspects of their lives – not just at school. OCAPS will assist us in knowing what funding programs work and where to put the dollars based on where the biggest problems lie. OCAPS compliments detection and intervention efforts by moving us toward primary prevention of abuse.

The Oregon Child Abuse Prevalence Survey (OCAPS) is the ideal companion to the Oregon Student Health Survey (formerly the Oregon Healthy Teen Survey), which collects climate survey data on the experiences of youth as students, while OCAPS will help us to better demonstrate prevalence of abuse and youth experiences in all aspects of the life. Combined, the Healthy Teen and OCAPS surveys will allow Oregon to more fully grasp the scope and impact of abuse, neglect, and violence in our communities, pointing us in the appropriate direction for solutions.

We are grateful to the University of Oregon and the Center for the Prevention of Abuse and Neglect for their contribution to and reinforcement of primary prevention strategies to address abuse, neglect, and violence in our communities, and fully support their effort to expand their strategies statewide.

INTERVENE: Child Abuse Intervention Centers

Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) provide critical services to children and families experiencing abuse, neglect, and violence. CACs ensure that children have a safe place to disclose abuse, neglect, and violence they are experiencing, enabling staff to properly diagnose and offer treatment services so that children can heal and access safety.

Unfortunately, the demand for services outpaces the capacity of CACs, who are under-resourced and under-funded, limiting access to these critical services when children need them the most. Allocating funding to Oregon's CACs will more adequately address this public health crisis and help ensure that all of Oregon's children experience thriving and healthy lives.

Young people in Oregon have earned the right to be served by a CAC specialist following their experiences of abuse and neglect. More than that – children deserve an investment in a future without violence and abuse, which is why we are proud to support this bill and urge your support of HB4112.

Sincerely,



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