



**Testimony in support of HB 4031**

***Assessing Behavioral Health workforce supply and demand***

February 4, 2020

Dear Chair Greenlick and Members of the House Behavioral Health Committee,

On behalf of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I am writing to express support for HB 4031, both to assess supply and demand of the behavioral health workforce and to replace outdated language with person-first terms relating to addictions and substance use disorder.

AOCMHP represents community mental health program (CMHP) directors across the state, who are responsible for managing the behavioral health safety net in their counties and for ensuring individuals and families have access to appropriate services and supports. We completely rely on a stable and robust workforce, both unlicensed and licensed, to provide a wide array of services and supports. Increased pay to support our behavioral health workforce is one of our top priorities for 2021. Analyzing past assessments and considering factors such as all behavioral health provider types, the various practice settings, mental illness and substance use disorder prevalence by geographic regions, and the higher education and training infrastructures needed will be immensely helpful in bolstering our workforce over the next several biennia.

Please support HB 4031 to help prepare for a targeted investment in Oregon's behavioral health workforce.

Sincerely,

*Cheryl L. Ramirez*

Cheryl L. Ramirez  
Director, AOCMHP