



TO: Senate Committee on Health Care
FROM: Stephen Rodgers, LPC, LMFT, COPACT Secretary
DATE: March 3, 2021
SUBJECT: SB 358

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, and members of the committee:

My name is Stephen Rodgers. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and the Secretary of the Coalition of Professional Associations for Counseling and Therapy. COPACT advocates for the 6,300 Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), Marriage Family Therapists (LMFTs), and Registered Interns who provide clinical mental health diagnosis and treatment to over 100,000 Oregonians each week through their work in agencies, universities, corrections, health clinics, rehabilitation, and private psychotherapy practices.

The Coalition of Oregon Professional Associations of Counselors and Therapists (COPACT) opposes SB 358.

Licensed mental health professionals are licensed by statute to assess, diagnose and treat issues of mental illness that appear in the DSM-V and ICD classification systems. In order to do what we have been given authority to do, we have gone through years of education, training, and supervision.

Behavior Analysis Interventionists need only 40 hours of training. We believe this bill gives this group of people the authority to treat diagnosed mental illness. We believe this danger only increases as they are allowed to treat those under age without parental consent.

LPC's and LMFT's in Oregon are required to have a Master's degree, pass a national test, and complete 2500 hours of direct contact with clients while under the supervision of a trained supervisor. It is during this training that we learn how to treat a wide variety of mental health issues.

We understand this bill seeks to change their being registered to being licensed and to allow them to meet with those under 14 without parental permission. We believe giving them licensure only increases the validity of their lack of training that goes against acceptable standards of who can treat those with diagnosed mental illnesses. For these reasons, we opposed SB 358.

Sincerely,

On behalf of COPACT
Stephen Rodgers, LPC, LMFT
Secretary, COPACT