



The Oregon Psychological Association appreciates the intention of HB 3139, which requires notification when a minor receives a suicide risk assessment, intervention, treatment or support services. As psychologists, we appreciate the parents and families whose lives have been torn apart by the pain of a child who died by suicide and understand wanting to ensure no one else feels that pain. We want that too—a world where suicide is no longer a concern, and everyone who wants and needs mental health services has access to them when they need them.

As such, we have concerns with HB 3139 in its current form. Not all youth have supportive, caring families who are equipped to engage and help their child get services. Some youth live in situations where seeking help for a mental health condition is not supported, and this bill could prevent them from seeking services altogether. This puts youth at even more risk, without a path for the provider's discernment currently available under the privilege Oregon law provides.

We are also concerned that this bill may cause providers to stop routine suicide assessments out of concern for their patients or even their own liability. It may also cause youth to underreport their concerns to avoid a confrontation with their parents. In short, requiring parental notification may unintentionally prevent youth in crisis from seeking help—something the makers clearly did not intend.

Finally, we are very concerned for the impact this bill would have on Lines for Life, specifically, YouthLine. Youth volunteers are trained in suicide risk assessment—and this bill would require them to notify parents every time they perform a risk assessment as part of their suicide prevention work. This would significantly undermine their ability to establish a trusting relationship during a crisis to support someone in seeking help.

Lines for Life has recommended that the language under Section (1)(b) be changed from “Shall advise” to “May advise.” We concur with this recommendation that would allow and support professionals who perform suicide risk assessments and determine minors to be at risk of suicide to disclose the information to parents when appropriate, without having to break the trusting relationship of routine risk assessments.

The Oregon Psychological Association shares the intent of a world where suicide is not a leading cause of death for our young people. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in revisiting this language in support of that intention.