



CONIFER CLINICAL SERVICES

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Testimony in support of SB 820

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelley Chimenti and I am an Oregon Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Clinical Sex Offense Therapist who specializes in the evaluation, assessment and treatment of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse. I own a private practice and am the Director of a sexual offense treatment program. I also supervise clinicians that are certified through the SOTB at the Associate, Secondary Clinical and Intern levels of certification. Additionally, I provide clinical supervision to therapists from around the State of Oregon who are seeking licenses in Clinical Social Work (LCSW), Professional Counseling (LPC) or Marriage and Family Therapy (LMFT). I am the Past President of the Oregon Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (OATSA), and the current Chair of the Oregon Health Authority – Sexual Offense Treatment Board.

The intent of HB3233 that was passed in 2007 was to establish qualification standards for clinicians and provide protections against unethical practices for all individuals receiving sexual abuse specific services. HB 3233 would outline evidence-based standards of practice for sexual abuse specific therapists in order to be recognized as an area of specialization which required particular training and expertise in addition to traditional mental health training and licensure.

PROBLEM: Exemptions are currently in place that allow the provision of sexual offense specific evaluation, assessment and treatment to be performed by non-certified people *who are employed by a local, state or federal government agency, community mental health program or drug and alcohol treatment program licensed or certified in this state, if the person's activities and services are performed and provided within the person's scope of employment.* This is problematic as there are no current standards of evaluation, assessment or treatment nor minimal training or education requirements for people who provide these specialized services in exempt settings. This primarily effects justice-involved adolescent youth. This can result in abusers receiving services from people in these exempt programs to be provided sub-standard or non-evidence-based evaluation, assessment and treatment which may result in an increased recidivism risk.

SOLUTION: Remove the exemptions to ensure that clinician qualification and training standards are upheld and protection against unethical practitioners is present for all people receiving these services. Additionally, SB 820 will ensure that clinicians providing sexual abuse specific treatment are properly trained and supervised and there is a process to address those clinicians who engage in substandard or unethical practices

SB 820 as written will increase public safety because all clinicians providing these specialized services will be required to have necessary qualifications and be trained and supervised according to evidence-based standards. Therefore, practitioners would receive proper training and supervision in a very specialized field of mental health disorders.