



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Date: May 11, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair Nancy Nathanson
The Honorable Vice-Chair Khanh Pham
The Honorable Vice-Chair E. Werner Reschke
Members of the House Revenue Committee

From: Maya Lopez, MD
Daniel Nicoli, DO
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

RE: Position statement on HB 3069 A, 988 Crisis Line

Chair Nathanson and members of the committee:

The Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA), a district branch of the American Psychiatric Association, was established in 1966. OPPA serves as the organization for Oregon's medical doctors specializing in psychiatry who work together to ensure effective treatment for persons with mental illness, including substance use disorders, and compassion for them and their families. **OPPA supports House Bill 3069 A, which establishes Oregon's coordinated crisis system and 9-8-8 Fund.**

Following Congress's passage of S.2661, the National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020, the FCC adopted rules to require all phone service providers to direct all "988" calls to the lifeline by July 16, 2022. This bill will help Oregon stand up the infrastructure to support the 988 crisis line. OPPA recommends a robust system addressing the continuum of care that spans all people in crisis; from older adults with cognitive impairment, to people with substance use disorders, to pediatric patients. The current system is adult-focused. There are no equivalent psychiatric emergency services for children and adolescents. Oregon needs to develop a systematic way to address these needs otherwise this effort will not be adequately successful.

OPPA also highly recommends incorporating [SAMHSA's national guidelines](#) into its approach rather than duplicating services or addressing parts of this system in a piecemeal way. The state will face many challenges, especially training the workforce to provide specialized care by July 2022 and providing additional resources for emergency departments and supports for patients and families upon discharge. Adequate funding, thoughtful preparation and coordination are key. OPPA members are eager to help assist with this effort to avoid challenges inherent in the system. Finally, a reminder that investing in care that keeps people from going into crisis is the healthiest and preferred approach.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement of support.