



Oregon Council of  
Child & Adolescent  
Psychiatry



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC  
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

March 22, 2023

To: Rep. Lisa Reynolds, Chair  
Rep. Hoa Nguyen, Vice Chair  
Rep. Anna Scharf, Vice Chair  
Members of the Early Childhood and Human Services Committee

From: Ajit Jetmalani, MD  
Oregon Council of Child Psychiatry  
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

Support for HB 3333 Just Culture Model

Greetings Chair Reynolds, vice chairs and members of the committee. For the record, I am Dr. Ajit Jetmalani. I am a professor of psychiatry and director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at OHSU. I also consult with the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services Child Welfare. Today I am here on behalf of the Oregon Council of Child Psychiatry and the Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association in support of HB 3333. This bill defines "just culture model" as culture where person is not punished for actions taken that are commensurate with training and experience, but where negligence, violations, and destructive acts are not tolerated. DHS will require child-caring agencies to submit a corrective action plan in lieu of an investigation under certain circumstances.

I have worked in the field of behavioral health over 40 years and during that time have worked in almost every level of care in our system. In our Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at OHSU, the science of human development and healing are of central importance. From my experience and from decades of research in the field of human development we know that there is nothing more important than the power of calm nonjudgmental predictable loving relationships when supporting resilience and healing from traumatic life experiences. Trauma informed care is based on this perspective. Based on the experience of a number of states and programs across the country, there are shared principles and elements that ensure the safety of youth while promoting good outcomes in high intensity levels of care. All of us strive to achieve the hope of these principles and practices across Oregon's continuum of services.

It is the duty of government and payers to ensure that they create an ecosystem where these well-established evidence informed elements of effective care are possible and all humans involved in that endeavor thrive. While we are making great strides towards this aim as we move out of the worst phases of the pandemic and begin to implement a myriad of community based services, we have a long way to go. Unfortunately, we have a regulatory system in place that is the antithesis of what we know about human development, relational health, trauma informed care and pathways to continuous learning and improvement. Our workforce and our foster parents experience fear of becoming the subject of allegations of neglect or abuse. We are losing people at alarming rates in our congregate care facilities. We struggle to recruit and retain foster parents. Our rates of temporary lodging are stubbornly high for youth in foster care. We have a population of youth who struggle with aggression as a coping strategy. In direct response to our current regulatory practices, residential and foster care providers will not accept these youth. Many of these youth present in crises to our emergency rooms but there are no options for them.

As described, HB3333 would continue to ensure that safety is paramount by identifying egregious behavior by people who should not be working with children. If implemented HB 3333 would also open the door to implementation of evidence based practices where all humans involved thrive in a continuous learning environment. We need children to feel safe and be safe with adults who are not afraid to help those in the greatest need. Please support this effort by supporting HB 3333.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ajit N. Jetmalani".

Ajit N. Jetmalani, M.D.