



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Date: April 24, 2023

To: The Honorable Chair Deb Patterson
Vice Chair Cedric Hayden
Members of the Committee

From: Daniel Nicoli, DO, Co-Chair
Maya López, MD, Co-Chair
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

RE: Position Statement on HB 2395A

Chair Patterson and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Daniel Nicoli and I'm a child and adolescent psychiatrist and co-chair of the Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association Legislative Committee (OPPA). The 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 HB 2395A.**

In my work, I work with youth and families in emergency departments, medical and psychiatric, hospitals, juvenile justice departments, and other settings. Over the past few years, I have noticed a concerning increase in youth struggling with opioid addiction, especially with fentanyl. I currently work with youth as young as 13-years-old struggling with fentanyl addiction who have at least one accidental and potentially fatal overdose. I also see young adults who have struggled with addiction for years but were never able to access appropriate medications for the treatment of substance use disorders or harm reduction.

Another concerning trend is the ease of access of fentanyl by youth. I am seeing more teenagers who visit emergency departments with suicidal ideation and a plan to attempt suicide by obtaining and overdosing on fentanyl. Fentanyl is a potent opioid and is lethal in small doses.

This legislation will save lives by increasing access to and removing barriers from us providing youth with appropriate medications for treatment of substance use disorders, both in reversing overdoses with opioid antagonists and treating active orders of addiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our perspective on this bill.