

Snake River PEDIATRICS

Infants, Children, & Adolescents

840 SW 4th Ave, Suite 105 • Ontario, OR 97914 • (541) 216-6556 • Fax (541)216-6557

Matthew Berria, PhD, PA-C • Sage Benintendi Stringer, MPAS, PA-C • Michelle DeVoe, DO, FAAP • Chelsie Lewis, FNP-C

Mary James, MPAS, PA-C • Kailey Meskill, MPAS, PA-C • Kayla Nagy, MPAS, PA-C • Matea Berria, MSPAS, PA-C

Andrew Echanis, LCSW • Bradi Fritts, LCSW • Jani Belcoe, LCSW

Chelsey Bidwell, CEO

April 28, 2023

To Joint Ways and Means Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to visit our community and hear the voices of our community members. My name is Kailey Meskill. I am a physician assistant and resident of Ontario, Oregon. I was born and raised in Ontario, and after spending time away for college and graduate school, my husband and I returned to this community to raise our children. For the past 8 years I have worked with infants, children and adolescents of Eastern Oregon through my job at Snake River Pediatrics.

I am in support of HB-2410 for many reasons. Firstly, on a personal level. I have been involved with efforts to renovate and reopen the Ontario Aquatic Center since moving back to the area. As a 2nd grader in Ontario, I took swim lessons at the Ontario Aquatic Center. With no public pool available in our town, my children currently cannot participate, as I was able to, in the development of this very important skill. My older brother was involved in swim team as a child, providing essential exercise and enabling him to learn a sense of accomplishment. Although, thanks to Ontario Recreation District, youth activity opportunities are increasing, they are currently inadequate. Childhood obesity and youth-involved crime rates are at dismal rates. The reopening of this facility would help alleviate these problems in our community. Secondly, I support this bill on a professional level. As a healthcare provider I see pediatric obesity and obesity-related illness on a daily basis. These are our LOCAL youth, who are the future of our community. As a community we are failing to provide safe opportunities for them to be physically active, thus minimizing their risk of obesity and obesity-related illness. Mental health disease has soared in recent years in the pediatric population. Exercise and social connectedness are two powerful tools in the fight against mental health. The reopening of this facility and addition of a community center to our town would provide a critical tool to help youth struggling with mental health disease.

We are a rural community and one of the poorest regions of the state of Oregon. Although our community members and local business leaders (including Snake River Pediatrics) have come to bat for this project, donating their time and hard-earned money, it is not enough. Funds allotted to this project through HB-2410 are critical in the timely completion of the Ontario Aquatic & Community Center, and ultimately to address several important issues, including the ones discussed above.

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Please help us help our community by passing HB-2410.

With utmost sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kailey Meskill PA-C". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kailey Meskill, MPAS, PA-C
Snake River Pediatrics