

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Mental Health Regulatory Agency Diversity Study

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Education Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Frederick

On February 1st, the Education Subcommittee recommended acknowledging receipt of a report from the Mental Health Regulatory Agency on its Diversity Study.

In 2021, the Mental Health Regulatory Agency was directed, through a budget note in HB 5006, to engage a third-party consultant to study the demographics of Oregon's mental health workforce and to devise a plan to increase licensee diversity in Oregon. The agency submitted its final report to the Legislature in December 2022.

Among the key findings were that racially and ethnically minoritized groups are underrepresented among mental health professionals in Oregon, when compared to mental health professionals nationally and the population of Oregon; racially and ethnically minoritized groups are overrepresented in complaints against licensees; and practitioners reported distrust of complaints and investigations processes and outcomes.

The report recommended the agency reconsider licensing policies and procedures to support equity; add safeguards around complaints, investigations, and disciplinary actions; and make and sustain a visible, active commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The Education Subcommittee recommends approval.