



Oregon
Community
Brokerages

February 7, 2024

To: Sen Gelser-Blouin, Chair, Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Katie Rose, Executive Director, Oregon Community Brokerages

Re: Support for SB 1522, eliminating civil commitment on the basis of IDD, improving access to Mental Health Services for people with IDD

Chair Gelser-Blouin and members of the committee,

Oregon Community Brokerages is comprised of the 14 Support Service Brokerages across Oregon. Collectively, we provide case management services to more than 7,500 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) living in their own or family homes in every community throughout the state. We connect people to what matters to them and support them to make the important decisions and choices that make up a life.

All people should have the authority and support to determine their own lives. The process of Civil Commitment runs contrary to our founding values of self-determination. For years, civil commitment on the basis of intellectual and developmental disability (IDD) has been used as a last resort, the least harmful option in a bad situation. SB 1522 removes the statutes that allow for civil commitment on the basis of IDD, commencing the work to build new and better options, services, and policies for supporting Oregonians in crisis.

Section 1: Repeals the statutes that allow for civil commitment on the basis of IDD

Over two decades ago, Oregon closed the doors on its institutions for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Brokerages were built to be a feature of Oregon's new way forward—services to support people to live and work in their communities. We affirm the steps that SB 1522 takes to continue on this path.

In order to be successful and safe in our communities, people with IDD need additional supports and solutions when they are at imminent risk of harm to themselves or others. We welcome the opportunity to expand our toolbox for meeting the needs of all people. Expanding public guardianship capacity and options, creating supported decision-making resources, and expanding mental health supports and access for Oregonians with IDD would all be a part of our vision.

Section 2: Prohibits public bodies from denying access to Mental Health Services on the basis of IDD services

There are not enough Mental Health resources to meet the needs of the Oregonians who need them. We look to other bills currently under consideration to move us forward to create and grow the services we desperately need. This bill will ensure that people with IDD are not denied access to these services on the basis of their disability. As case managers working with people with IDD, we hear too often from Mental Health practitioners unwilling to work with people with IDD. People with IDD can and should be able to benefit from the therapy and practices of Mental Health services. Their needs in this area are not IDD-specific needs, they are human needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments in support of SB 1522 and setting us on a course for what comes next.