



Good morning Chair Hartman, Vice Chair Scharf, and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Steve Chinn and I'm the COO of Trillium Family Services. Trillium Family Services is Oregon's sole provider of a full continuum of mental health services for youth ages 5-24. Our 685 employees provide a diverse array of programs from outpatient therapy to secure inpatient services.

Trillium Family Services supports HB 3835.

To be clear, this bill does not eliminate comprehensive rules describing when and how providers of psychiatric services engage a physical hold or seclusion to stop a youth from active attempts to harm themselves or another person.

The current rules were written in a very detailed manner to prescribe safety. Unfortunately, they are putting child safety at risk by jeopardizing the safety of the caregivers, particularly in more acute settings. Unlike a school, our specific services are only accessed by youth with behaviors that present a danger to themselves or others. As such, our employees are required to frequently intervene during violent, unpredictable trauma-based episodes.

These employees who put themselves in harms-way to support youth in crisis are frequently reported for abuse, even when the intervention prevents violence and results in no pain or injury to the youth. This is because under current rules administrative and compliance requirements have been linked to abuse and neglect. This has created a culture of fear within the mental health workforce that at best inhibits their efficacy with the children and at worst drives them out of the industry.

It is impossible for a childcare worker to be calm and thoughtful with youth while constantly being suffocated by the threat of abuse allegations.

HB3835 corrects this issue. It retains the current, high safety standards but shifts the investigation and enforcement of administrative and compliance issues like training, documentation, and intervention requirements to the more than capable licensing bodies of ODHS and OHA while allowing the ODHS Abuse Investigations teams to attend to truly harmful cases of abuse and neglect.

We urge you to pass HB 3835 as it will improve care, reduce waste, revitalize the workforce, and ultimately help the system protect the youth we are here to serve.

Thank you for your time.

Steve Chinn, MSW, MBA
Chief Operations Officer
Trillium Family Services